The London School of Economics and Political Science

EUROPE'S BOTTLENECK:
The Iberian Peninsula and the Jewish Refugee Crisis, 1933-1944.

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Declaration

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Abstract

This thesis offers a transnational history of the Jewish refugee crisis in South-Western Europe, and assesses the role of the Iberian Peninsula in the Holocaust. It does so by looking at Vichy France, Franco's Spain, and Salazar's Portugal. It explores the possibilities of rescue, and the offer of relief. It accounts for the persecution of Jews in Spain and Portugal. And it examines the role of the Western Allies in offering relief and promoting the rescue of Jews in the region. Crucially, this thesis also focuses in the role of humanitarian organisations, both private and intergovernmental, in tackling the Jewish refugee situation. The role of Jewish underground groups in organising the clandestine crossing of the Pyrenees is also explored in detail. Lastly, this thesis also accounts for the decimated possibilities of transportation from the Iberian Peninsula during the war, and for the repercussions of this transportation crisis for the Jewish refugee crisis and the Holocaust.

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List of Acronyms

AEAA	Association d'Étude, d'Aide, et d'Assistance
AEL	American Export Lines
AFHQ	Allied Forces Headquarters
AFSC	American Friends Service Committee; and archives (Philadelphia, PA)
AGA	Archivo General de la Administración (Alcalá de Henares)
AGMG	Archivo General Militar de Guadalajara (Spain)
AHC	Archivo Histórico Provincial de Cádiz (Spain)
AHG	Arxiu Històric de Girona (Spain)
AHLL	Arxiu Històric de Lleida (Spain)
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid)
AHUJI	Archives of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem
AJ	Armée Juive
AJHS	American Jewish Historical Society; and archives (New York)
AMAE	Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores (Alcalá de Henares, Spain)
AMNE	Arquivo Histórico Diplomático do Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros (Lisbon)
ANTT	Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (Lisbon)
AOS	Arquivo Oliveira Salazar (Lisbon)
AP	Associated Press
ARC	American Red Cross
ASF	American Sephardi Federation
AUA	American Unitarian Association
BOAC	British Overseas Airways Corporation
BPCO	British Passport Control Office
BSC	Brethren Service Committee
CADN	Centre des Archives Diplomatiques de Nantes
CAEVEAF	Comité d'Aide aux Engagés Volontaires Étrangers Dans

	l'Armée Française
CAHJP	Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (Jerusalem)
CARE	Comité d'Assistance aux Réfugiés Étrangers
CAS	Centre Américain de Secours
CCAC	Comité de Coordination pour l'Assistance dans les Camps
CCN	Companhia Colonial de Navegação
CDJC	Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine (Paris)
CEDA	Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas
CENM	Compañía Española de Navegación Marítima
CFLN	Comité Français de Libération Nationale
CIMADE	Comité Inter-Mouvements Auprès des Évacués
CJH	Center for Jewish History (New York)
CNN	Companhia Nacional de Navegação
COMASSIS	Comissão Portuguesa de Assistência aos Judeus Refugiados em Portugal
CRE	Cruz Roja Española
CT	Camp de Travailleurs
CTE	Compañía Transatlántica Española
CTM	Compañía Transmediterránea
DCNAJ	Documentation Center of North African Jewry during World War II (Jerusalem)
DGS	Dirección General de Seguridad
ÉIF	Éclaireurs Israélites de France
Emigdirect	United Jewish Emigration Committee
ERC	Emergency Rescue Committee ('Emerescue')
EVDG(s)	Engagé(s) Volontaires pour la Durée de la Guerre
FAU	Friends Ambulance Unit
FDRL	Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library (Hyde Park, NY)
FEA	Foreign Economic Administration
FO	Foreign Office
FPJ	Federation of Polish Jewry

FRS	Friends Relief Service
Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei
GJCA	German-Jewish Children's Aid
GT(s)	Groupement(s) de Travailleurs
GTE (s)	Groupement(s) des Travailleurs Étrangers
GTI(s)	Groupement(s) des Travailleurs Israélites
HIAS	Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society
HICEM	HIAS-JCA Emigration Association
HRFDR	Holocaust Refugees and the FDR White House (Microfilm collection)
ICN	International Council of Nurses
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IGCR	Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees
IKG	Israelitische Kultusgemeinde
IMS	International Migration Service
IRA	International Relief Association
IRO	International Refugee Organisation
IRRC/IRC	International Rescue and Relief Committee
ISK	Internationaler Sozialistischer Kampfbund
JAFC	Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee
JAFRC	Jeanne d'Arc French Refugee Camp
JAP	Jewish Agency for Palestine
JCA	Jewish Colonization Association
JDC	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee; and archives (New York)
JTA	Jewish Telegraphic Agency
KLM	Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands
LAPE	Líneas Aéreas Postales Españolas
LBI	Leo Baeck Institute Archives (New York)
MAE	Ministerio de Asuntos Extranjeros
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee

MJS	Mouvement de la Jeunesse Sioniste
MNE	Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros (Lisbon)
MoWT	Ministry of War Transport
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration (College Park, MA)
NARC	North African Refugee Camp
NCC	National Coordination Committee for Aid to Refugees and Emigrants Coming from Germany
NCCJ	National Conference of Christians and Jews
NCWC	National Catholic Welfare Conference
NIOD	Instituut voor Oorlogs-, Holocaust- en Genocidestudies (Amsterdam)
NRS	National Refugee Service
OFRRO	Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations
OHD	Oral History Division Interviews (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)
OID	Oficina de Información Diplomática
OJC	Organisation Juive de Combat
OSE	Œuvre de Secours aux Enfants
PA AA	Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts (Bonn)
PAC	President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees
PAN AM	Pan American Airways
PIDE	Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado
POUM	Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista
POW(s)	Prisoner(s) of War
PRC	Portuguese Red Cross
PRO	Public Record Office (London)
PSF	President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Secretary's File (Hyde Park, NY)
PVDE	Polícia de Vigilância e Defesa do Estado
PWRCB	President's War Relief Control Board
RHSA	Reichssicherheitshauptamt

RM	Reichsmark
RSARO	Representation in Spain of American Relief Organizations
SAP	Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands
SD	Sicherheitsdienst
SER	Service d'Évacuation et de Regroupement
SERE	Service d'Évacuation et de Regroupement des Enfants
SGTM	Société Générale de Transport Maritimes
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters, Allied European Forces
SiPo	Sicherheitspolizei
SRRC	Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign
SSAÉ	Service Sociale d'Aide aux Émigrants
TNA	The National Archives (Kew)
UGIF	Union Générale des Israélites de France
UNOG	United Nations Office at Geneva Archives
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
UP	United Press
USC	Unitarian Service Committee; and archives (Cambridge, MA)
USCOM	United States Committee for the Care of European Children
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; and archives (Washington, DC)
WAKO	Waffenstillstandskommission
WJC	World Jewish Congress; and archives (Cincinnati, OH)
WRB	War Refugee Board; and archives (Hyde Park, NY)
WSF	World Sephardi Federation
YIVO	Yiddish Scientific Institute; and archives (New York)
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association; and archives (Minneapolis, MN)
YV	Yad Vashem Archives (Jerusalem)

I stared at the ship. Glaringly lighted, it lay at anchor in the Tagus. Though I had been in Lisbon for a week, I hadn't yet got used to its carefree illumination. In the countries I had come from, the cities at night were black as coal mines, and a lantern in the darkness was more to be feared than the plague in the Middle Ages. I had come from twentieth-century Europe'

Erich Maria Remarque, *The Night in Lisbon* (London: Hutchinson & Co, 1964), 5.

Introduction

The aim of this thesis is twofold: to offer a transnational history of the Jewish refugee crisis in its South-Western European dimension, and to assess the role of the Iberian Peninsula in the Holocaust. Judging by its near absence in Holocaust historiography, the Iberian Peninsula has traditionally played a peripheral role in our understanding of the Holocaust. In purely geopolitical terms, Spain and Portugal did remain on the margins of World War II and did not witness the mass-murder of Jews within their boundaries. Yet to assume that the Peninsula has no significance to either the war or the Holocaust would be a tremendous mistake. In our collective memory, and to a certain extent also in Holocaust historiography, there prevails the notion that the Iberian Peninsula was a 'safe haven'. This view has been supported by the fact that the majority of persecuted Jews who set foot south of the Pyrenees managed to survive the Holocaust. Owing to this 'success story', the significance of the Iberian Peninsula has been trivialised, and the experiences of those who saved their lives through this avenue —as well as those who failed in trying— have been overlooked. Surely, the many hazards facing Jewish émigrés in the Peninsula were in no way comparable to the horrors of Nazi camps and ghettos, but they were part of the same nightmare. Besides the moral need to research this chapter of the Holocaust, there are at least three different dimensions that make the Iberian Peninsula central to the Jewish refugee crisis.

The first, and most obvious dimension, is the Peninsula's role as a hinge between Nazi-occupied Europe and the free world. This was facilitated by the geographical context of the Peninsula —framed by the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, and with a 623 km-long border with France— as well as by its multiple maritime connections to the Americas, Palestine, and North Africa. Whilst this was true since 1933, the Peninsula's centrality as a land of transit came to the forefront after June 1940, when the German occupation of Western Europe narrowed emigration avenues to the ports of Spain and Portugal. There was one exception: the Port of Marseille. But this option, too, disappeared in November 1942 when the Axis took over Vichy France and sealed its borders

completely. From that moment until the liberation of France in August 1944, an uncertain journey across the perilous Pyrenees mountains became virtually the only way out of Europe's inferno. For this reason, this thesis looks not just at the Spanish and Portuguese geographies, but also at that of Vichy France. After all, it is only possible to make sense of refugee transit through the Iberian Peninsula when considering the reality that existed above the Pyrenees.

The second dimension is political. As signatory parties to the Second Hague Convention (1907) and neutrals in the war, both Spain and Portugal were legally required to grant asylum to prisoners of war from either side — whether or not they lived up to this obligation will be discussed in detail.[1] As for the refugees, however, there was no international treaty to protect them. Not even a legal definition of the term 'refugee'. In fact, it was only in 1948 that the right to asylum was proclaimed, and in 1951 that the term 'refugee' was codified in international law.[2] Until then, refugees wanting to move through national borders were entirely at the mercy of the states touched by the crisis and their immigration laws. 'Asylum is a privilege conferred by the State. It is not a condition inherent in the individual', wrote Sir John Hope Simpson in 1939.[3] Having omnipotent sovereignty over its national borders, states around the world refused admission to undesired foreigners, whether for reasons of national security, foreign or domestic policy, or simply national pride. This realistic approach to the 'refugee problem' also led to the rapid escalation of immigration restrictions in the Iberian Peninsula. For fear of lagging behind their neighbour, the Spanish and Portuguese governments engaged in an unconscious race with one another, that effectively reduced the Peninsula's potential as land of transit and shelter for Jewish refugees fleeing Nazism.[4]

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[1] Art. 13 of the fifth treaty of the Hague Convention of 1907 states: 'A neutral power which receives escaped prisoners of war shall leave them at liberty. If it allows them to remain in its territory it may assign them a place of residence.' See Hague Convention, (V) *Respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land* (18 October 1907), art. 13.
[2] See UN General Assembly, 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights', Resolution 217-A-III (10 December 1948), art. 14; and UN General Assembly 'Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees', United Nations Treaty Series, Vol. 189, No. 2545 (28 July 1951), art. 1.
[3] Sir John Hope Simpson, *The Refugee Problem: Report of a Survey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), 231.
[4] This 'domino effect' is best described in Susanne Heim, 'International Refugee Policy and Jewish Immigration under the Shadow of National Socialism', in Frank Caestecker and Bob Moore (eds.), *Refugees from Nazi Germany and the Liberal European States* (New York: Berghahn,

Naturally, the Nazis were aware of this dynamic, and exploited it to their benefit. Israeli historian Shlomo Aronson argued that the Nazi policy of forcing the emigration of Jews from the Reich was not just a way to get rid of 'undesirable' elements in their society. It was also a premeditated attempt to 'fan' antisemitism abroad. By forcing anti-Jewish radicalisation on third parties and dehumanising its victims, this policy aimed at weakening the capacity of the democracies touched by the refugee crisis to resist Nazism:

> 'With the Holocaust developing like a sort of a doomsday machine set in motion from all sides, the Jews found themselves between the hammer and the various anvils, each of which worked according to the logic created by the Nazis that dictated the behaviour of other parties and the relations between them before and during the Holocaust'.[5]

The third dimension is that of rescue. This is not a straightforward issue, however. Let us consider Dan Michman's definition of 'rescue': 'an action taken to extricate Jews from an immediate Nazi menace or total removal of Jews from an area that the Nazis' tentacles reached'.[6] In view of this definition —and more specifically its latter part— a Jewish person removed from Nazi-occupied territory into Spain would not be 'rescued' proper. Owing to Spanish-German police collaboration and Francoist antisemitic practices more generally, the safety of Jews in Spain, even of Jews of Spanish nationality, was not guaranteed at any point during the war. In this sense, 'rescue' was not the result of a single act in time, such as migration to Spain. Instead, a series of 'rescue efforts' was necessary to guarantee the survival of Jewish persons.

For this reason, an understanding of the fine balance between the several agents and circumstances involved in this 'process of rescue' is crucial. In the first level of agency, there were those who assisted refugees on an individual basis, as well as private organisations who offered specialised migration, relief, and rescue aid. On a second level, there were the governments of the neutral

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2010), 17-47.

[5] Shlomo Aronson, *Hitler, the Allies, and the Jews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), xi-xiv.

[6] Dan Michman, *Holocaust Historiography: A Jewish Perspective: Conceptualizations, Terminology, Approaches, and Fundamental Issues* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2003), 181.

countries in this region: Vichy, Madrid, and Lisbon. Finally, the third level is that of the Western Allies: London and Washington. Methodologically, this thesis will approach the 'process of rescue' tending to the triangular relationship between these three levels of agency. In addition to the actors, it is also essential to consider circumstances concomitant to the refugee's plight, such as the context of war itself, the scarcity and unreliability of means of transport, and red-tape obstacles to migration. An awareness of all these elements is necessary prior to assessing whether or not the Iberian Peninsula's rescue potential was exploited to the fullest, and the extent to which the Allies acted upon such potential.

Owing to its broad nature, this study informs itself and builds upon an extensive range of literature. In terms of geographical scope, Patrick von zur Mühlen's monograph *Fluchtweg Spanien-Portugal* (1992) is closest to the rationale of this thesis, as it is the only narrative that conceives the role of the Iberian Peninsula per se in the Jewish refugee crisis.[7] In regards to methodology, this thesis follows the example of a long list of previous works that deal with the Jewish refugee crisis from the perspective of humanitarian response. These studies are equally transnational in nature.[8]

This thesis also builds upon scholarly literature specific to each national context, and seeks to contribute to each four different domains of Holocaust historiography: Vichy France, Franco's Spain, Salazar's Portugal, and the Allies.

In regards to Vichy France, Michael Marrus' and Robert Paxton's *Vichy France and the Jews* (1981) still remains the work of reference on the attitudes of the Pétain regime towards Jews.[9] In *Uneasy Asylum* (1999), Vicki Caron skilfully

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[7] Patrick von zur Mühlen, *Fluchtweg Spanien-Portugal: die Deutsche Emigration und der Exodus aus Europa 1933-1945* (Bonn: Dietz, 1992).

[8] See for instance Debórah Dwork, and Robert Jan van Pelt, *Flight from the Reich: Refugee Jews, 1933-1946* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009); Caestecker and Moore (eds.), *Refugees from Nazi Germany and the Liberal European States*; Tommie Sjöberg, *The Powers and the Persecuted: the Refugee Problem and the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR), 1938-1947* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1991); and Yehuda Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust: the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1939-1945* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1981); Corry Guttstadt, Thomas Lutz, Bernd Rother, and Yessica San Román (eds.), *Bystanders, Rescuers or Perpetrators? The Neutral Countries and the Shoah* (Berlin: Metropol Verlag & IHRA, 2016).

[9] Michael R. Marrus, and Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books,

integrated French public opinion with the role of the French Jewish Community in the rescue of persecuted Jews.[10] Susan Zuccotti and Asher Cohen, on the other hand, have enlarged our understanding of Jewish survival in France, and examined the ways in which the French population assisted in this task.[11] Others scholars, such as Anne Grynberg, have focused on the study of the conditions of internment in France.[12] Considering how crucial the Port of Marseille was for the rescue of Jews from unoccupied France, and particularly during the first half of the war, Dona Ryan's work is equally indispensable.[13] Lastly, there is also an long historiographical tradition that deals specifically with the Jewish resistance in France, and the cooperation between underground movements and relief organisations in saving Jewish lives from arrest, internment, and deportation.[14]

Although some of these studies have explored some aspects of the clandestine rescue networks across the Pyrenees, these have not been fully integrated with the context of the Iberian Peninsula. This thesis addresses this gap in the historiography, in particular, through the use of testimonies and documentation from the Jewish underground in France, as well as internal correspondence and memoranda from several relief organisations who participated from these rescue activities (Chapter 5B-C). Other France-related themes that feature in this study include the evacuation of Jewish children from unoccupied France by the US Committee for the Care of European Children (2C), the rescue work of Varian Fry at the head of the Marseille-based *Centre*

1981).

[10] Vicky Caron, *Uneasy Asylum: France and the Jewish, Refugee, Crisis, 1933-1942* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

[11] Susan Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews* (New York: BasicBooks, 1993); Asher Cohen, *Persécutions et Sauvetages: Juifs et Français sous l'Occupation et sous Vichy* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1993).

[12] Anne Grynberg, *Les Camps de la Honte: Les Internés Juifs des Camps Français, 1939-1944* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 1991).

[13] Donna F. Ryan, *The Holocaust & the Jews of Marseille: the Enforcement of Anti-Semitic Policies in Vichy France* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1996).

[14] See for instance Anny Latour, *La Résistance Juive en France, 1940-1944* (Paris: Stock, 1970); Jean Estèbe, *Les Juifs à Toulouse et en midi Toulousain au temps de Vichy* (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 1996); Lucien Lazare, *La Résistance Juive: un Combat pour la Survie* (Paris: Nadir, 2001); Georges Loinger, *Les Résistances Juives pendant l'Occupation* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2010); and Sabine Zeitoun, *L' Œuvre de Secours aux Enfants, OSE, sous l'Occupation en France: du Légalisme à la Résistance, 1940-1944* (Paris: l'Harmattan, 1990), 176-179; and Georges Garel, *Le Sauvetage des Enfants Juifs par l'OSE* (Paris: Éditions Le Manuscrit, 2012).

Américain de Secours (2D), and the terrible experience of Jews sailing from the Port of Marseille on so-called 'floating concentration camps' (2E).

Ever since the end of World War II, the historiography on Franco's Spain and the Holocaust has been polluted with the propaganda disseminated by the Francoist regime. This propaganda depicted General Franco as a benevolent dictator and 'saviour' of thousands of Jewish lives during the Holocaust.[15] Two of the first scholarly attempts to correct this issue were severely handicapped by the Francoist government's own intromission in the writing process. As such, the two monographs by Federico Ysart and Chaim Lipschitz largely reinstated the biased narrative of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[16] The flawed views presented in these two works were in turn exaggerated by a number of Spanish historians seeking to make apology of the dictator.[17] Unfortunately, those tergiversations also permeated the work of foreign non-partisan historians who have echoed the regime's propaganda unintentionally.[18] Israeli historian Haim Avni was the first serious scholar to systematically challenge Francoist propaganda in his authoritative monograph *Spain, the Jews, and Franco* (1982), which remains the main work of reference after more than four decades.[19] Avni's work was followed by Antonio Marquina Barrio's and Gloria Inés Ospina's *España y los Judíos en el siglo XX* (1987), which devoted one fourth to the period of World War II, and whose assessment of the Francoist role during the Holocaust was even harsher than Avni's.[20] Over the last two decades,

[15] See Pedro Correa Martín-Arroyo, '"Franco, Savior of the Jews"? Tracing the Genealogy of the Myth and Assessing its Persistence in recent Historiography', in Alexandra Garbarini and Paul Jaskot (eds.), *Lessons and Legacies of the Holocaust XIII: New Approaches to an Integrated History of the Holocaust: Social History, Representation, Theory* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2018), 195-218.

[16] Federico Ysart, *España y los Judíos en la Segunda Guerra Mundial* (Barcelona: Dopesa, 1973); and Chaim U. Lipschitz, *Franco, Spain, the Jews, and the Holocaust* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1984).

[17] See for instance Ricardo de la Cierva, *Franco y la Guerra Mundial* (Madrid: ARC Editores, 1997), 140; and Luis Suárez Fernández, *España, Franco y la Segunda Guerra Mundial (desde 1939 hasta 1945)* (Madrid: Editorial Actas, 1997), 480-95.

[18] See for instance Caesar C. Aronsfeld, *The Ghosts of 1492: Jewish Aspects of the Struggle for Religious Freedom in Spain, 1848-1976* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 47-55; and William D. Rubinstein, *The Myth of Rescue: Why Democracies could not have Saved more Jews from the Nazis* (London: Routledge, 1997), 146.

[19] Haim Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco* (Philadelphia, 1982). First published in hebrew in 1974.

[20] Antonio Marquina Barrio and Gloria Inés Ospina, *España y los Judíos en el siglo XX: La Acción Exterior* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1987).

several studies of excellent quality have informed our understanding of this subject in various ways. In *Franco und der Holocaust* (2001), German historian Bernd Rother added the perspective of German archival sources, and informed us of the atittudes of the Franco government towards the Nazi 'repatriation campaign' (*Heimschaffungsaktion*), as well as the role of Spanish diplomats in the rescue of Spanish Jews from the Holocaust.[21] José Antonio Lisbona, on the other hand, has further explored the conflicting relationship between the government in Madrid and its foreign service abroad in regards to the protection of Jews in Nazi-occupied territories.[22] Isabelle Rohr's *The Spanish Right and the Jews* (2007) enhanced our understanding of Spanish antisemitism and its implications, both for Jews under Francoist jurisdiction as well as the Spanish Jewish colony in Spanish Morocco, the Balkans, and France.[23] More recently, Josep Calvet has dedicated two monographs to the study of the Pyrenees mountain range as a land of transit during World War II.[24] Lastly, there is also a number of scholars who have informed us of other aspects of Spanish Jewish life and the Spanish Sephardim from historical, anthropological, and sociological perspectives.[25]

One aspect that has not been explored previously in historiography on Spain and the Holocaust and that this thesis advances is Spanish-German police cooperation in the persecution of Jews on Spanish soil, both foreign and Spanish nationals (Chapters 3C, 3D, 4A); as well as in the expulsion of Jews of Spanish nationality who were otherwise lawful Spanish residents (5A). This has been possible through the juxtaposition of several archival collections that are

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[21] Bernd Rother, *Franco und die Holocaust* (Tubingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2001); also published in Spanish under the title *Franco y el Holocausto* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2005). I will be using the Spanish translation.

[22] José Antonio Lisbona, *Retorno a Sefarad: La Política de España hacia sus Judíos en el Siglo XX* (Barcelona: Riopiedras, 1993); and *Más Allá del Deber: La Respuesta Humanitaria del Servicio Exterior Frente al Holocausto* (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación, 2015).

[23] Isabelle Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews, 1898-1945: Antisemitism and Opportunism* (Sussex: Cañada Blanch Centre for Contemporary Spanish Studies & Sussex Academic Press, 2007).

[24] Josep Calvet, *Las Montañas de la Libertad: el paso de Refugiados por los Pirineos durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial, 1939-1944* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2010); and *Huyendo del Holocausto: Judíos evadidos del Nazismo a través del Pirineo de Lleida* (Lleida: Milenio, 2014).

[25] See for instance Danielle Rozenberg, *La España Contemporánea y la Cuestión Judía* (Madrid: Casa Sefarad-Israel & Marcial Pons, 2010); Davide Aliberti, *Sefarad: Una Comunidad Imaginada, 1924-2015* (Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2018); Maite Ojeda Mata, *Modern Spain and the Sephardim: Legitimizing Identities* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2018).

different in character: US and British diplomatic collections, Spanish penitentiary and police files, and material from several relief organisations. Some of which are being used here for the first time. A second contribution of this thesis to Spanish historiography, is that it offers a comprehensive narrative of the relief offer available to Jewish refugees in Spain throughout the whole period under scrutiny (Chapters 1E, 3E, 4B-C-D, and 5B-D). This has been possible through the cross-examination of internal correspondence, case files, reports, and memoranda from more than a dozen relief organisations that were active in the region. In particular, two relief efforts connected to the US Embassy in Madrid —those led by Virginia Weddell (3E) and David Blickenstaff (4B-C)— are here being narrated in detail for the first time. A third original contribution that runs through this thesis is the systematic comparison of Spain and Portugal in regards to police and official attitudes to Jewish refugees, their government's immigration and visa policies, and attitudes towards relief more generally.

Like Spain, Salazarist Portugal had a similar development so far as historiography is concerned. For decades, Salazar's *Estado Novo* enjoyed the reputation of a 'refugee paradise' during World War II—one from which Franco's Spain undoubtedly benefited. However, even if Portugal was arguably closer to that ideal than any other country in continental Europe at the time, that image is useless as from a historical point of view. It is only in recent years that several scholars have nuanced and differentiated, for instance, the actions and attitudes of the Portuguese government from those of 'Righteous' diplomats such as Aristides de Sousa Mendes and Alberto Teixeira Branquinho. Yad Vashem historian Avraham Milgram has published one of the most authoritative monographs on the subject, *Portugal, Salazar, and the Jews* (2011), which examines Salazar's policies towards Jewish refugees, his collusion with Portuguese consuls abroad, the Portuguese relief dimension, as well as Portugal's role in the 'repatriation' of Jews of Portuguese nationality from Nazi Europe.[26] Another historian who has published extensively on

[26] See Avraham Milgram, *Portugal, Salazar, and the Jews* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2011); and Milgram, Avraham. 'Portugal, the Consuls and the Jewish Refugees, 1938-1941', in David Cesarani, and Sarah Kavanaugh (eds.), *Holocaust: Responses to the Persecution and Mass Murder of*

Portugal is Irene Flunser Pimentel, who has authored two major works on Salazarist Portugal and the Holocaust —one of them in cooperation with Cláudia Ninhos.[27] Ansgar Schaefer's monograph, on the other hand, focuses on German Jewish migration to Portugal in the crucial period of 1933-1940.[28] Marion Kaplan has researched on refugee life in Lisbon during the war.[29] Douglas Wheeler, on the role of the PVDE, the Portuguese secret police, and its connections with its German and Spanish counterparts.[30] Lastly, José Freire Antunes and Esther Mucznik have addressed several aspects of Jewish life in Portugal and the Holocaust.[31]

In addition to providing a side-by-side comparison with Francoist Spain, this thesis contributes to Portuguese historiography in at least two ways. The first has to do with the extensive relief initiatives organised by private aid organisations from Lisbon (Chapters 3F, and 5D). The emphasis is placed on how the various groups operative the Portuguese capital came together to maximise the offer of relief most efficiently (3F), and why did the War Refugee Board (WRB) 'fail' to produce any significant results in the Peninsula (5D). This thesis' second contribution to this field concerns the ever-present role of Portuguese shipping and the Port of Lisbon in making possible the evacuation of thousands of refugees and POWs from Europe (Chapters 3B, 4C).

The fourth and last historiographical field with which this thesis engages with is the debate around the possibilities of rescue by the Allies —particularly

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the Jews (London: Routledge, 2004), 355-379.

27 Irene Flunser Pimentel, *Judeus em Portugal durante a II Guerra Mundial: em Fuga de Hitler e do Holocausto* (Lisbon: A Esfera dos Libros, 2006); in cooperation with Margarida de Magalhães Ramalho, *O Comboio do Luxemburgo: Os Refugiados Judeus que Portugal Não Salvou em 1940* (Lisbon: A Esfera dos Libros, 2016); and in cooperation with Cláudia Ninhos, *Salazar, Portugal, e o Holocausto* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 2013).

28 Ansgar Schaefer, *Portugal e os Refugiados Judeus Provenientes do Território Alemão (1933-1940)* (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2014).

29 Marion Kaplan, 'Lisbon is Sold Out! The Daily Lives of Jewish Refugees in Portugal during World War II', *The Tikvah Center for Law & Jewish Civilization, Tikvah Working Paper* 1:3 (2013), 1-22.

30 Douglas L. Wheeler, 'In the Service of Order: the Portuguese Political Police and the British, German, and Spanish intelligence, 1932-1945', *Journal of Contemporary History* 18:1 (January 1983), 1-25.

31 José Freire Antunes (ed.), *Judeus em Portugal: o Testemunho de 50 Homens e Mulheres incluindo um texto de Jorge Sampaio* (Versailles: Edeline, 2002); and Esther Mucznik, *Portugueses no Holocausto: Histórias das Vítimas dos Campos de Concentração, dos Cônsules que Salvaram Vidas e dos Resistentes que Lutaram contra o Nazismo* (Lisbon: A Esfera dos Livros, 2012).

the governments of the US and the United Kingdom— and the extent of their achievements. This debate is particularly dominant in US historiography, which has produced a long list of monographs critical of the US government's role during the Holocaust, and whose claims have achieved greater popularity over the last few decades.[32] In the case of Britain, publications critical of the role of the Allies have been on the whole more moderate.[33] Scholars on this side of the debate criticise the 'failure' of the Allied governments in saving more Jewish lives from murder at the hands of the Nazis and their accomplices. Their arguments focus, for instance, on the restrictive immigration policies of the US and Great Britain; the fact that the two Western Allies did not bomb Auschwitz and the other death camps; and their refusal to negotiate with the Nazis on behalf of European Jews. This historiography places a considerable share of guilt for the murder of six million European Jews on the Allied governments and the Jewish communities of Britain and the US. But these arguments fail to acknowledge the obvious. Although the Allies failed at many things, it was the 'success' of the Nazi's killing machine that made the extermination of six million Jews possible.[34] Indeed, the capacity of the Allied governments to engage in the rescue of Jews was severely limited by the adverse military situation that lasted for most of the war, and often futile.[35] Israeli historian Yehuda Bauer has passionately rejected this 'America-centric' historiography for its 'provincial and limited' understanding of the role of the US in the Jewish refugee crisis, as disconnected from the rest of the world.[36] Last, but not least,

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[32] The most influential titles critical of the role of the US are Arthur Morse, *While Six Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1968); David S. Wyman, *Paper Walls: America and the Refugee Crisis, 1938-1941* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1968), 'Why Auschwitz Was Never Bombed', *Commentary* 65:5 (May 1978): 37-46, and *The Abandonment of the Jews*: America and the Holocaust, 1941-1945 (New York: Pantheon, 1984); Saul Friedman, *No Haven for the Oppressed: United States Policy Toward Jewish Refugees, 1938-1945* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1973); and Herbert Druks, *The Failure to Rescue* (New York: R. Speller, 1977).

[33] See for instance Bernard Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe, 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press & Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1979). The historiography on the rescue debate is discussed at length in William D. Rubinstein, *The Myth of Rescue: Why the Democracies could not have saved more Jews from the Nazis* (London: Routledge, 1997), 1-14.

[34] Martin Gilbert, *Auschwitz & the Allies* (Feltham: Hamlyn, 1981).

[35] On this side of the debate Richard Breitman, and Alan M. Kraut, *American Refugee Policy and European Jewry, 1933-1945* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988); and Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust.*

[36] Yehuda Bauer, 'Holocaust Rescue Revisited', *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* 7:3 (2013): 140.

there is also an important list of publications on the work of American aid organisations with Jewish refugees in Europe on which this thesis builds upon.[37] Rebecca Erbelding's recent addition to this list, *Rescue Board* (2018), deserves special mention as it is the first comprehensive study of the WRB, the single most powerful US government initiative to rescue Jewish lives from the Holocaust.[38]

Although this thesis focuses on the Iberian Peninsula and its vicinity, it has also implications for the role of the Allies in the Holocaust. In particular, it questions the claims of 'cirtical' historiography in two ways. On the one hand, it does so by pointing towards the many ways in which the Allies engaged in offering relief, and the extent to which they promoted the rescue of victims of racial persecution through the Peninsula (Chapters 2C-D-E, 3E-F, 4A-B-C-D, and 5A-B-C-D). This results mainly from the analysis of archival material from private relief organisations together with US and British governmental sources. A second contribution to this historiographical debate aims to 'relativise' the role of the Anglo-American Allies in the Jewish refugee crisis. In other words, by emphasising the numerous obstacles in the way of relief, rescue, and emigration from the Iberian Peninsula, this thesis subscribes to Aronson's view that 'the interplay between the various parties contributed to the victims' doom first by preventing help and later by preventing rescue … the victims were manoeuvred into death in stages, and the final outcome was neither within their grasp nor open to their influence or action'.[39]

This PhD Thesis is structured chronologically in three parts. Each of these three sections corresponds to three distinctive stages of Jewish persecution. The first part corresponds to Chapter 1, and deals with the six years between Hitler's takeover and the outbreak of war (1933-39). The second part comprises Chapters 2 and 3, and covers the two years between the German occupation of

[37] See Yehuda Bauer, *My Brother's Keeper: a History of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1929-1939* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1974); Susan Elisabeth Subak, *Rescue & Flight: American Relief Workers Who defied the Nazis* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010); Haim Genizi, 'American Interfaith Cooperation on behalf of Refugees from Nazism, 1933-1945', *American Jewish History* 70:3 (March 1981), 347-61.
[38] Rebecca Erbelding, *Rescue Board: The Untold Story of America's Efforts to Save the Jews of Europe* (New York: Doubleday, 2018).
[39] Aronson, *Hitler, the Allies, and the Jews*, xi-xiv.

Western Europe and the Allied military landings in French North Africa (1940-42). The third part encompasses Chapters 4 and 5, and spans from the Allied North African offensive to the liberation of France (1943-44).

Chapter 1. The International Community and the Jewish Refugee Crisis, 1933-1939: deals with the development of the Jewish refugee crisis and the responses of the international community from Hitler's arrival to power in 1933 to the onset of the war in 1939.

A) The League of Nations and the Jewish Refugee Problem: contextualises the Jewish refugee crisis within the larger 'refugee problem' that ensued the Great War, the Bolshevik revolution, and the redrawing of Europe's borders at the Versailles peace process. It also provides an overview of the League of Nations' attempts to tackle the 'Jewish refugee problem'.

B) Forced Emigration from Nazi Germany: examines the increasingly radical policies of the Nazi government aimed at forcing the emigration of German Jews from the Reich.

C) The International Community and the Closed-Door Policy: surveys the possibilities of absorption of Jewish refugees from Germany around the globe, observing a direct correlation between the increasing radicalisation of Nazi Germany's anti-Jewish policies and the tendency of the international community towards stricter immigration policies.

D) The Iberian Peninsula and the Jewish Refugee Crisis: focuses on the Iberian Peninsula as land of refuge, outlining the interaction between political developments in Portugal (*Estado Novo*) and Spain (Second Spanish Republic, and Spanish Civil War) and the shifting attitudes towards Jewish refugees.

Chapter 2. Escaping France, 1940-42: accounts for the intensification of the Jewish refugee crisis following the outbreak of war, and especially, after Hitler's occupation of Western Europe.

A) France: Internment and Persecution: examines the rapid deterioration of French refugee policies after September 1939, the signing of the armistice in June 1940, and the subsequent establishment of the Vichy

government. In addition to the mass imprisonment of refugees, this section also accounts for the introduction of racist antisemitic policies by Pétain's regime.

B) Relief and Rescue in Vichy France: offers an overview of the relief and rescue initiatives in the camps of unoccupied France, jointly organised by various groups of different political and religious background.

C) The US Committee for the Care of European Children: accounts for the work of the USCOM, the first government-supported children rescue initiative in the US since the beginning of the war.

D) Emergency Rescue: examines various attempts to assist the migration of Jewish and political refugees from Vichy France after the summer of 1940.

E) Ships to Nowhere: explores sailings from the Port of Marseille to the French Caribbean as an alternative to Peninsular migration to the Americas, and demonstrates how challenging and dangerous emigration could be.

<u>Chapter 3. The Iberian Peninsula: Europe's Bottleneck, 1940-42:</u> covering the same chronology, this chapter focuses instead on the escalation of the Jewish refugee crisis in the Iberian Peninsula after the fall of Western Europe to the Germans.

1. **A) Iberian Transit:** examines the role of the Iberian Peninsula as a land of transit during the early months of the war, and accounts for the toughening of Portuguese and Spanish immigration policies in response to this influx.
2. **B) The Transportation Crisis:** like 2E, this section accounts for the shortage of transportation possibilities available to refugees stranded in the Iberian Peninsula, and how the escalation of US foreign policy from neutrality to war affected the shipping crisis. It also proposes this shortage of transportation as one of the triggers for the halt to the Nazi policy of forced emigration, and the transition to the 'Final Solution'.
3. **C) The Iberian Peninsula and the Axis:** examines the foreign policy of both Iberian dictatorships in the war in regards to their 'neutrality', and accounts for Francoist Spain's collaboration with the Axis, particularly in regards to Spanish-German police cooperation.

4. **D) The Persecution of Jews in the Iberian Peninsula:** accounts for the persecution of Jews in mainland Spain as well as Spanish-occupied Tangier, in contrast with Portugal, where Jews were relatively safe.
1. **E) The Organisation of Relief in Franco's Spain:** accounts for the Spanish lack of cooperation on relief matters and hostility to foreign relief organisations, and how the US Embassy in Madrid managed to organise relief despite such hostile environment.
2. **F) Lisbon: Europe's Refugee Capital:** in contrast to Spain, Salazar's Portugal tolerated and even facilitated the work of private relief organisations with Jewish refugees coming from the Europe. This section highlights the city of Lisbon as the 'refugee capital' from where most of the relief and rescue work in the region was orchestrated.

Chapter 4. The Allied Response, 1943-44: begins in November 1942, with the Allied amphibious invasion of French North Africa and the subsequent occupation of Vichy France by the Axis. This chapter accounts for the shifting Allied attitudes towards relief and rescue.

1. **A) Franco's Spain: The Stumbling Block:** following the sudden halt to legal migration from Nazi-occupied Europe, Francoist Spain replaced Portugal as the crucial land of transit. Spain is flooded with clandestine refugees and POWs and the Franco government struggles to resist pressure from both sides to the war.
2. **B) The Embassy of the Stateless:** accounts for the establishment of RSARO, a relief committee dependent and protected by the US Embassy that is created *ad hoc* to address Spain's stateless problem. Soon after, it became the busiest refugee centre in the entire Iberian Peninsula.
3. **C) Evacuation from Spain:** coordinated by RSARO and the various relief committees it represents, the Americans proceed to evacuate Spain's stateless and POW population, doing a great service to the Spanish government.
4. **D) Bermuda, the IGCR, and Fedhala**: deals with the Anglo-American refugee conference at Bermuda and two of its main goals: the

reactivation of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR); and the establishment of an UNRRA-administered refugee centre in Fedhala, in French North Africa, to funnel Jewish refugees from Spain in an attempt to persuade the Franco regime to adopt more lenient border policies.

Chapter 5. Rescue against the Clock, 1943-44: this chapter examines several attempts to remove Jewish persons from Nazi-occupied territory and into the Iberian Peninsula. The narrative ends in August 1944, when the liberation rendered the these activities unnecessary.

A) Rescue and Deportation: it deals with the inconsistent rescue policies of Franco and Salazar surrounding the German 'repatriation campaign' (*Heimschaffungsaktion*) of Jewish individuals with Portuguese and Spanish passports to their respective countries, which, paradoxically, was initiated by the Nazi government in early 1943 as a sign of 'diplomatic deference' towards all neutral countries. This section also contrasts this 'rescue' initiative with the expulsion of foreign-born Jews of Spanish nationality from Spain.

B) The Jewish Resistance and the Rescue of Children: provides with an overview of the Jewish underground movement in Southern France, and the beginning of their clandestine rescue initiatives following the onset of the deportations in 1942. It deals in particular with the efforts of the *Armée Juive*, and a clandestine organisation (SER) specifically created to direct children convoys into Spain. It also accounts for the reception of these children convoys into Spain.

C) The Jewish Resistance and the Rescue of Adults: building on the previous section, this one deals with the *Armée Juive*'s underground rescue network for adults (SERE) and examines their not so successful attempts to obtain the cooperation of the relief agencies on the southern side of the Pyrenees.

D) The War Refugee Board in the Peninsula: a Lost Opportunity? established by US President Franklin D. Roosevelt in January 1944, the War Refugee Board sought ways —often clandestine— to rescue Jewish persons

from Nazi-occupied Europe. Despite its great drive, the WRB was rather unsuccessful in the Iberian Peninsula: in Madrid, owing to the US ambassador's obstinacy; and in Portugal, due to the incompetence of the WRB delegate and the lack of cooperation between relief committees, particular regarding the custody of the children-refugee convoys that the Jewish resistance was smuggling over the Pyrenees.

Chapter One:

The International Community and the Jewish Refugee Crisis, 1933-1939

The League of Nations and the Jewish Refugee Problem

In the nineteenth century there was no 'refugee problem'. There had been 'exiles' who went into foreign lands seeking political, artistic, and intellectual freedom.[1] But this situation shifted dramatically consequence of the brutal conflicts that launched the twentieth century: the Great War (1914-1918), its preamble (Balkan Wars of 1912-13), and its aftermath (Caucasus wars of 1918-21, Polish–Soviet War of 1919-21, and Greco-Turkish War of 1919-22). In the Russian Empire alone, the Great War and the 1917 revolutions generated at least one and a half million refugees, and as many as seven million displaced persons.[2] The redrawing of Europe's boundaries agreed at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919, and the population exchanges between Greece and Turkey stipulated at Lausanne in 1923 also contributed to a rapidly growing refugee population.[3] Coinciding with the rise of the nation-state and ethnic nationalism, governments across Europe began to introduce elaborate passport and visa regimes to assert the distinction between citizens and those who were not socially or economically desirable.[4] In Turkey, these practices led to the denationalisation of nearly 250,000 Assyrians, Greeks, Armenians, and other ethnic minorities. In the Soviet Union, the issuance of denationalisation decrees to Russian exiles aimed at diminishing anti-Soviet activity abroad during the 1920s, and resulted in some 500,000 stateless refugees.[5] By 1926, Europe's

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[1] See Edward H. Carr, *The Romantic Exiles: A Nineteenth Century Portrait Gallery* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1933), and Sylvie Aprile, *Le Siècle des Exilés: Bannis et Proscrits de 1789 à la Commune* (Paris: Éditions CNRS, 2010).

[2] The refugee figure is from Simpson, *The Refugee Problem*, 75. The figure of displaced persons is from Peter Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 29.

[3] See Eugene M. Kulischer, *Europe on the Move: War and Population Changes, 1917-1947* (New York: Columbia University press, 1948); and Rudolf Graupner, 'Statelessness as a Consequence of the Change of Sovereignty over Territory after the Last War', in Paul Weis, and Rudolf Graupner (eds.), *The Problem of Statelessness* (London: British Section of the World Jewish Congress, July 1944), 27-40.

[4] Jessica Reinisch, and Matthew Frank, 'Introduction: Refugees and the Nation-State in Europe, 1919-59', *Journal of Contemporary History* 49:3 (July 2014): 479-80. On the introduction of passport and visa regimes, see Gérard Noiriel, *La Tyrannie du National: Le Droit d'Asile en Europe, 1793-1993* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1991); and Mark B. Salter, *Rights of Passage: The Passport in International Relations* (London: Lynne Rienner, 2003).

[5] Anglo-Jewish Association, 'Statelessness', *Memoranda prepared in Connection with the London Conference of Jewish Organisations*, 2 (London: Office of the Anglo-Jewish Association, February

refugee population reached 9.5 million people.[6]

Faced with this 'threat' to the nation-state, governments around the world reacted by introducing conservative immigration policies with racist undertones. In the USA, the introduction of the quota system by the Immigration Acts of 1921 and 1924 not only resctricted immigration; it also served to engineer a desired ethno-national composition.[7] Canada introduced similar legislation to prioritise the arrival of persons from 'preferred' countries in Western and Northern Europe over 'non-preferred' countries in Central and Eastern Europe; whilst Jewish, Asian, and African backgrounds were dismissed as less desirable.[8] British Dominions such as Australia and New Zealand also introduced immigration restrictions for non-British migrants. Latin American governments, on the other hand, gave preferential treatment to agricultural colonists and immigrants of similar cultural tradition from Italy, Spain, and Portugal.[9]

The first attempts to deal with the refugee problem internationally were prompted by the aggressive denationalisation policy of the Bolshevik government. In July 1922, the League of Nations convened at Geneva to discuss the situation of stateless persons of Russian origin who needed travel documents but could not appeal to their national authorities. The resulting agreement introduced the 'Nansen Passport', an alternative identity document that did not confer citizenship rights upon the bearer, but allowed stateless

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1946), 1-2. In Turkey, ethno-nationalist frenzy contributed to the systematic extermination of no less than 600,000 and possibly more than a million Armenians at the hands of the Young Turks. See Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia and the Middle East, 1914-1923* (London: Routledge, 2001), 110.

[6] This estimate includes 2 million Russians and Ukrainians, 2 million Poles awaiting repatriation, 1.5 million persons exchanged between Greece and Turkey; 280,000 between Greece and Bulgaria, 1 million Germans, and 250,000 Hungarians. Michael R. Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford Universtiy Press, 1985), 51-2.

[7] This quota system was intended to restrict the inflow of Southern- and Eastern-Europeans in favour of those from Northern- and Western-European origin. This legislation also restricted immigration from African countries, and barred immigration from Asian and Middle-Eastern countries altogether. See Aristide R. Zolberg, *A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (New York: Russell Sage/Harvard University Press, 2006).

[8] Irving Abella, and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1982), 5.

[9] Claudine M. Skran, *Refugees in Inter-War Europe: The Emergence of a Regime* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 21-3.

persons to travel through international boundaries. Named after the League's High Commissioner for Refugees, the Norwegian Dr Fridtjof Nansen, these identity documents were usually valid for a year and became void when the bearer adopted a new nationality. Although the goal of the Nansen passport was to improve the situation of stateless refugees of Russian origins, this agreement laid the towards a legal definition of refugee. Thus in 1924, the High Commissioner's mandate was extended to Armenian refugees.

A second breakthrough took place in June 1928 at the Intergovernmental Conference on the Legal Status of Refugees, the first international meeting to examine the refugee problem in greater depth. To protect refugees from the former Ottoman Empire and the new Turkish Republic, the mandate of the High Commissioner was extended to include refugees from Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean, Syrian, Kurdish, and Turkish origin. In addition, the 1928 Intergovernmental Conference also proposed the standardisation of refugee rights such as the right to work and to access a court. But given that these recommendations were non-binding, the conference failed to allocate specific responsibilities on signatory states.

Indeed, when Hitler rose to power in 1933, the concept of 'refugee' as a legal category in its own right had not yet been established.[10] The Convention Relating to the International Status of Refugees, signed in October 1933, was a first attempt to introduce a comprehensive legal protection for refugees tailored after the rights then accorded to aliens. Most importantly, it was the first international agreement to codify the right to 'non-refoulement' —from the French *refoulement*: to drive back, or repel. This meant that signatory countries pledged not to refuse entry to refugees, nor to forcibly remove them to a country or territory where they could be exposed to persecution.[11] Unfortunately, the provisions of the 1933 Convention were limited to refugee demographics already recognised by the League of Nations's mandate, and not to German

[10] A definition of refugee was not codified until 1951. See UN General Assembly, 'Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees', *United Nations Treaty Series*, Vol. 189, No. 2545 (28 July 1951).
[11] See art. 3 of the 'Convention Relating to the International Status of Refugees', *League of Nations Treaty Series* Vol. CLIX No. 3663 (28 October 1933).

Jewish refugees.

In the midst of the economic catastrophe that ensued the 1929 Wall Street Crash, the League postponed indefinitely the extension of the High Commissioner's mandate to the Jews of Germany.[12] As early as June 1933, Dutch, Belgian, Swiss and French workers' delegates had warned that their respective national labour markets were unable to cope with the inflow of Jewish refugees from Germany.[13] The deteriorating economic and political landscape that surrounded the Great Depression also led many governments to deny key social benefits, such as the right to work, to foreign aliens regardless of nationality. In France, for example, a law of May 1932 attempted to protect the national labour force by capping the number of foreigners who could be employed in each industrial sector at 5 to 30 per cent.[14]

Although discussions regarding the need to establish an international organ to care for refugees froim Nazism began during the spring of 1933, none of the League's member states dared to push for its creation for fear of antagonising Hitler. Although Nazi Germany had abandoned the League in October 1933 over the disarmament issue, membership withdrawal only entered into force after a period of two years, during which Germany retained the capacity to veto any of the League's initiatives in favour of German refugees. Indeed, the German representative at the League of Nations made it clear that his government would oppose any new refugee organisation established by the League unless it was politically and financially independent from it. This was a calculated strategy of the Nazi government to silence any criticism from the League's General Assembly, which thereafter would have no say on Berlin's anti-Jewish policies.[15]

In October 1933, the League of Nations appointed James G. McDonald

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[12] Peter Fitzmaurice, 'Between the wars —the Refugee Convention of 1933: a Contemporary Analysis', in David Keane, and Yvonne McDermott (eds.), *The Challenge of Human Rights: Past, Present, and Future* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2012), 237-8.
[13] Mark Wischnitzer, *To Dwell in Safety: The Story of Jewish Migration since 1800* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1948), 182.
[14] Simpson, *The Refugee Problem*, 275.
[15] Susanne Heim, 'International Refugee Policy and Jewish Immigration under the Shadow of National Socialism', in Caestecker and Moore (eds.), *Refugees from Nazi Germany and the Liberal European States*, 20-1.

as High Commissioner for Refugees Coming from Germany (Jewish and other). To satisfy German demands, McDonald's enterprise was effectively deprived from any political or financial support from the League of Nations and its member states. Struggling to survive on unfulfilled promises and the sole support of private Jewish organisations, McDonald resigned in December 1935 having achieved very little. In his resignation letter, McDonald argued that relief measures alone would not suffice to address the plight of Jewish refugees, and urged the League to direct political action 'at its source, if disaster is to be avoided'.[16]

In February 1936, the League of Nations decided to appoint a new High Commissioner to look after the intersts of refugees coming from Germany: Sir Neill Malcolm, a retired British general with good contacts in Germany dating from his work for the Inter-Allied Military Commission during the Versailles peace process. One of Malcom's most pressing tasks was to organise a new intergovernmental conference that convened in Geneva in early July 1936. Its main outcome was the adoption of the Provisional Arrangement Concerning the Status of Refugees Coming from Germany, which made available to German refugees identification documents equivalent to the Nansen Passport, and forbid their expulsion from host states unless 'dictated by reasons of national security or public order'.[17] Unfortunately, the 1936 Provisional Arrangement fell short of its potential. In line with the League's appeasement policy, it provided a vague interpretation of the term 'refugee coming from Germany' that abstained from identifying Jews as the main refugee demographic in need of assistance, nor racial discrimination as the main reason for their plight. Similarly, it made no mention of the refugee's right to work, welfare, or relief —all issues that had been covered in the 1933 Convention. Even if the 1936 Provisional Arrangement did improve the situation of refugees

[16] James G. McDonald, *Letter of Resignation* (London, 27 December 1935). Cited in Bentwich's *The Refugees from Germany: April 1933 to December 1935* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1936), 219-228, quote is from 227.

[17] The signatory states of the 1936 Provisional Arrangement were Belgium, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Switzerland. See art. 4.2 in League of Nations, 'Provisional Arrangement concerning the Status of Refugees Coming from Germany', *League of Nations Treaty Series*, Vol. CLXXI, No. 3952 (4 July 1936).

who left Germany during the first years of Nazi rule, it failed to achieve a long-term solution to the Jewish refugee problem, as signatory states were reluctant to guarantee asylum to future refugee arrivals.

To amend the shortcomings of the 1936 agreement, a new international refugee conference took place in Geneva in February 1938 and adopted the Convention Concerning the Status of Refugees Coming from Germany.[18] The 1938 Convention expanded the definition of 'refugees coming from Germany' to include all stateless persons fleeing Nazi regime regardless of national origin. It also clarified that the expulsion of refugees posing a threat to national security should only be used by host states as a last resort, if refugees failed —'without just cause'— to organise their migration to a third country after being required to leave by one of the contracting parties. Likewise, the 1938 Convention stipulated that national labour protection laws —such as the aforementioned French law of 1932— should not be enforced 'in all severity' if refugees were lawful residents of that country, and waived altogether if they had been residents of that country for at least three years, or had familial ties to one of its nationals.

Some scholars have identified both the 1936 Provisional Arrangement and the 1938 Convention as two attempts of the League of Nations to appease public opinion on the issue of German refugees without making any major concession in the field of immigration policy. The right to 'non-refoulement', for instance, is completely absent in these two agreements, and their provisions governing asylum weaker than those of the 1933 Convention. From the perspective of the governments touched by the crisis, the main purpose of these two agreements was to normalise the status of refugees already living within their borders while creating new legal provisions to safeguard national interests. In doing so, policy makers also implied that such preferential treatment would not be available to future refugee arrivals. As a result, even if these conventions did advance refugee rights internationally, the social benefits offered on paper

[18] The 1938 Convention was ratified by Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom. See League of Nations, 'Convention concerning the Status of Refugees Coming From Germany', *League of Nations Treaty Series*, Vol. CXCII, No. 4461 (10 February 1938).

did not materialise in practice, and fell short in providing a long-term solution to the Jewish refugee problem.[19]

Nazi Germany's annexation of Austria (*Anschluss*) and the German-speaking regions of Czechoslovakia (*Sudetenland*) in March and October 1938 respectively initiated a new wave of refugees from Austria an Czechoslovakia that stunned governments across Europe. Most potential countries of refuge reacted by closing their borders or implementing evermore restrictive immigration and refugee policies, as their governments feared that Jewish refugees would remain permanently after their visas expired. This caused a chain reaction by which the governments touched by the crisis toughened their immigration policies independently from one another, in an attempt to repel the stream of refugees who had been rejected by neighbouring countries.[20]

The last important international conference on the refugee issue before the outbreak of World War II convened on initiative of US President Franklin D. Roosevelt in mid-July 1938 at Évian, on the French side of Lake Geneva. Contrary to the common myth deeming Évian a 'failure' to rescue Jews from Nazi Germany, the sole purpose of the conference was to discuss and exchange information regarding the plight of Jewish refugees with no binding character.[21] A more tangible consequence of the Évian conference was the establishment of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR). The goal of this autonomous refugee organisation was to mediate between Berlin and potential countries of resettlement in replacing the chaotic exodus from Nazi Germany with an orderly emigration scheme.

The London-based IGCR first convened in August 1938, and by early 1939 had already presented plans for the migration of 400,000 Jews from the Reich. Although the Germans initially refused to meet with IGCR Chair George Rublee, it was the German Minister of Economy Hjalmar H. G. Schacht —the economic 'wizard' behind the German economic miracle— who

[19] See for instance Hermann Bekaert, *Le Statut des Étrangers en Belgique* (Brussels: Larcier, 1940), 373-4; Tartakower and Grossman, *The Jewish Refugee*, 411; and Caron, *Uneasy Asylum*, 137-9.
[20] Heim, 'International Refugee Policy', 38-9.
[21] Paul R. Bartrop, *The Evian Conference of 1938 and the Jewish Refugee Crisis* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018), 95-106.

first presented the American lawyer with an emigration plan in December 1938.[22]

In business-like fashion, Schacht devised a plan that would facilitate the migration of 400,000 Jews from the Reich over a three-year period, and tackle at the same time Germany's balance-of-payment crisis. Schacht's migration plan was to be entirely financed with the property of German Jewry, which he estimated at about six billion *Reichsmark* (RM). Since German Jews could only legally remove about 25 per cent of their capital, Schacht proposed that the German government would impound 25 percent of the total wealth of German Jewry —about 1.5 billion RM— and place it in a giant trust fund that was to serve as a collateral for bonds issued to prospective migrants by an international corporation representing 'international Jewry'. These bonds, each for value of 10,000 RM, would be granted to German Jews in foreign currency to facilitate their resettlement elsewhere. Crucially, repayment of this debt in foreign exchange was made contingent on an increase in German exports. The plan found strong opposition within the US government, which objected to the promotion of Germany's export trade, as well as within Jewish circles, who interpreted Schacht's scheme as an attempt to blackmail German Jewry and promote the antisemitic trope of 'international Jewry'.

Against all odds, George Rublee continued to negotiate with the German government even after Schacht's dismissal from the *Reichsbank* in January 1939. During a meeting in London on 13 February, the IGCR Chairman presented a revised version of Schacht's plan that circumvented the contentious need to repay through an increase in German exports, and was thus favourably regarded by the US government. Despite successful negotiations with Berlin, the Schacht-Rublee plan progressed slowly over the following months and would never materialise. Whilst the IGCR struggled to find countries of resettlement, Jewish relief organisations had no less difficulties to raise the exorbitant sum of money needed to fund the project. The initiative was abandoned altogether following the German invasion of Poland in September

[22] See for instance Hjalmar H.G. Schacht, *Confessions of "the Old Wizard": the Autobiography of Hjalmar Horace Greeley Schacht* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1974).

1939.[23] Over the first three and a half years of the war, the IGCR existed only on paper. It was not until the spring of 1943 that the Anglo-American conference at Bermuda would seek new ways to reinvigorate the IGCR.

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[23] For a detailed account of the Schacht-Rublee negotiations see Sir John Hope Simpson, *Refugees: A Review of the Situation since September 1938* (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1939), 18-21; Bauer, *My Brother's Keeper*, 273-85; Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue*, 50-5; Wyman, *Paper Walls*, 53-4; Skran, *Refugees in Inter-War Europe*, 250-5; and Marc Eric McClure, *Earnest Endeavors: The Life and Public Work of George Rublee* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 247-77.

Forced Emigration from Nazi Germany

During the first eight and a half years that spanned between Hitler's arrival to power in 1933 and the regime's ban on Jewish migration of October 1941, the Jews of Germany were 'encouraged' and often forced to migrate from the Third Reich. But in 1933, the majority of them did not resort to emigration because they reckoned that Hitler and his regime were a 'passing phenomenon'.[24] As Nazi antisemitism radicalised, however, pressure to migrate escalated. With every new act of violence and piece of legislation aimed at equating citizenship to ethnic community, the Jews of Germany were progressively excluded from Hitler's 'people's community' (*Volksgemeinschaft*).[25]

This process can be sequenced in several stages of increasing radicalisation. The first phase of antisemitic persecution started in March 1933 with the introduction of anti-Jewish legislation aimed at ostracising Jews from public life. A second stage of radicalisation ensued the proclamation of the Nuremberg Laws in September 1935, whereby German Jews were biologically classified as second-class subjects of the state and the legal category of 'non-Aryan' was established, laying the foundation for more subsequent persecution measures. Following the annexation of Austria in March 1938, the situation of the Jews under Nazism rapidly deteriorated, reaching its critical point during the pogroms of '*Kristallnacht*' of 9-11 November 1938. Thereafter, the Nazi government forced the emigration of Jews from the Third Reich using every method at their disposal.

The first wave of antisemitic persecution began as soon as Hitler received full powers from the newly elected Reichstag on 23 March 1933. Overnight, acts of violence against Jewish individuals and Jewish property ensued, accompanied from above by anti-Jewish legislation aimed at eliminating Jews from Germany's political, intellectual, and economic life. During April, four

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[24] Stephen S. Wise, *As I See It* (New York: Jewish Opinion Publishing Corporation, 1944), 97-9.

[25] Although there were 400,682 self-declared Jews in Germany at the beginning of 1933, the number of people who would be classified as 'non-Aryan' persons according to Nazi racist ideology is estimated at 760,000. See Bauer, *My Brother's Keeper*, 114.

laws barred 'non-Aryans' from civil service, the legal profession, medicine, and established quotas on the number of Jewish students in universities and public schools.[26] In an omen of what awaited European refugees abroad, the Nazi government continued by alienating its own Jewish refugee population. On 14 July 1933, the law concerning the Cancellation of Naturalisations and the Deprivation of German Nationality empowered the government to revoke citizenship rights, and was mainly directed against Jewish immigrants who had settled down in Germany in the interwar period.[27]

Against all odds, anti-semitic legislation in Nazi Germany seemed to relax towards the end of 1933, when several measures promoted the illusion that the Nazi government would restrict yet tolerate Jewish economic activities. This impression was favoured by several policies such as the Ministry of Economics' ban on boycott actions against non-Aryan firms (8 September), and its order protecting non-Aryan workers, artisans, and businessmen from discrimination (24 November). The Ministry of Labour also issued an order purportedly equating the rights of Jewish and non-Jewish employees. As Nazi racist legislation seemed to temper, German Jewish leaders began to advise Jews not to risk the dangers of emigration. Accordingly, Jewish emigration from Germany subsided from about 400-500 persons a day in mid-1933, to 10-20 in early 1934. As summarised by the president of the *Hilfsverein der Deutsche Juden* ('Relief Association of German Jews'), German Jews desired 'to stay in their homeland, Germany, whose future was their own'.[28]

From the onset, Jewish organisations in Germany opposed a general exodus from the onset, favouring instead the gradual and orderly emigration of a number of people proportional to the possibilities of absorption abroad.[29]

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[26] Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 28.

[27] Paul Weis, 'Statelessness as a Legal-Political Problem', in Paul Weis, and Rudolf Graupner (eds.), *The Problem of Statelessness* (London: British Section of the World Jewish Congress, July 1944), 9.

[28] The citation is from a speech given at the Hilfsverein's annual meeting on 27 May 1934. Cited in Mark Wischnitzer, 'Jewish Emigration from Germany, 1933-1938', *Jewish Social Studies* 2:1 (Jan. 1940): 27-8.

[29] This was the policy of the *Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland* ('Central Organisation of Jews in Germany'), a Jewish umbrella organisation established by the Nazis in September 1933. See for instance the work of the Reichsvertretung's executive secretary between 1933 and 1936, Solomon Adler-Rudel, *Jüdische Selbsthilfe unter dem Naziregime, 1933-1939. Im Spiegel der Berichte der Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1974).

Rather than looking for havens at any cost and under any conditions, they thoroughly investigated weather conditions, employment possibilities, and other cultural and social considerations within the countries of emigration.[30] Jewish organisations focused their relief work on those who had less means to arrange and finance their emigration; while those who had financial means and relatives abroad often organised their own resettlement.

This was an exhausting process. To obtain all the necessary documentation, prospective emigrants had to dwell with a long list of agencies, at the risk of being denied departure if one single document was missing or expired. To facilitate this process, as well as to escape persecution in their hometowns, many Jews moved to more populous cities. Those who had distant relatives in potential countries of refuge contacted them asking for financial guarantees, money, or support with their immigration. Following many complaints from foreign non-Jews who had received such appeals from desperate German Jews with whom they had no connection, Berlin prohibited Jews from writing letters to foreign citizens of the same family name.[31]

As the Nazi government became more stable than initially thought, public opinion towards refugees in countries of refuge became increasingly more hostile. The negative social effects of the Great Depression and widespread unemployment prompted governments abroad to refuse entry to immigrants in the belief that they would take away jobs and burden the state's welfare schemes. The governments of France, Netherlands, Denmark, and Austria raised concerns over the increased competition that German Jewish refugees could bring to their respective national communities, and tightened their immigration policies accordingly. Sometimes even Jewish communities adopted an anti-refugee stance for fear that the stream of German Jewish refugees might exacerbate antisemitic feelings at home.[32] Consequently, if 50,000 German Jews found asylum abroad in 1933, this figure dropped to

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[30] Abraham Margaliot, 'The Problem of the Rescue of German Jewry during the Years 1933-1939: The Reasons for the Delay in their Emigration from the Third Reich', in Israel Gutman, and Efraim Zuroff (eds.), *Rescue Attempts during the Holocaust: Proceedings of the Second Yad Vashem International Historical Conference* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1977), 247-260.
[31] Heim, 'International Refugee Policy', 28.
[32] Ibid., 23-6.

23,000 in 1934, and to 21,000 in 1935.[33]

The proclamation of the Nuremberg Laws 'for the protection of German blood and honour' on 15 September 1935 legally sanctioned biological racist ideology and prompted a new stage of anti-Jewish radicalisation in Hitler's Germany. By virtue of these laws, 'non-Aryan' subjects of the state were redefined as 'state subjects' (*Staatsangehörige*), thus ceasing to be German citizens proper (*Staatsbürger*). In addition, Jews were forbidden from marrying or maintaining sexual relations with 'Aryan' Germans. This distinction between subject and citizen laid the foundation for further exclusionary policies.

Simultaneously, the Nazi regime continued to alienate German Jewish citizens from the economy, most notably through the policy of 'Aryanisation' of Jewish firms, which involved their transfer to non-Jewish owners at a price far below their market value. By the end of 1935, it is estimated that nearly 25 per cent of Jewish business had been liquidated in this way.[34] Even if anti-Jewish persecution eased briefly during the 1936 Summer Olympics in a calculated attempt to cultivate the regime's international image, it was clear by then that the Nazi government would continue to force the eradication of the German Jewish community through emigration.[35] Indeed, despite diminishing emigration possibilities abroad, Jews continued to crowd the offices of the *Hilfsverein*. By the end of 1937 it was estimated that a total of 140,000 Jews had left Germany.[36]

During 1938, Nazi Germany unleashed a new stage of anti-Jewish persecution, this time beyond its actual borders. On 12 March 1938, Austria 'joined' (*Anschluss*) Hitler's Germany, thus bringing 186,000 more Jewish persons under Nazi jurisdiction. Considering that the Nazis' plans to reduce to penury the Jews living in this region was executed in just a few weeks —as opposed to several years in the case of Germany— the experience of Austrian

[33] Dwork and van Pelt, *Flight from the Reich*, 18, and 92-95.
[34] Peter Longerich, *Holocaust: The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 66.
[35] Bauer, *My Brother's Keeper*, 137.
[36] Francis R. Nicosia, and David Scrase (eds.), *Jewish Life in Nazi Germany: Dilemmas and Responses* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 7.

Jews under Nazi rule was relatively more brutal.[37] The Nuremberg Laws were introduced on 27 May 1938, and by January 1939 the total exclusion of the Jews of Austria from active participation in public life was already complete.

Up to 1938, migration from the Reich had been supervised by non-Nazi administrators at the Ministry of the Interior's Office of Migration in close cooperation with Jewish aid organisations. From the spring of 1938, however, the Office of Migration was taken over by the SS, which replaced the relatively orderly migration methods of the preceeding bureaucracy with merciless tactics of forced migration. Four days after the annexation, Adolf Eichmann arrived in Vienna to direct the Central Office for Jewish Emigration (*Zentralstelle für jüdische Auswanderung*) with instructions to force the emigration of Austrian Jews. One of the tactics utilised to that end was the so-called 'Green Border', a slang expression used by the Gestapo to denote the act of picking up foreign-born Jews and dumping them across the border into no-man's land.[38] These ruthless methods of forced migration had been commonplace with the Polish Jewish community living in the Third Reich. By October 1938, about 28,000 Polish Jews who had been German residents for years (the so-called '*Ostjuden*') were deported to bordering regions between Germany and Poland.[39] In the case of Austrian Jews, the SS employed trucks and trains loaded with refugees who were dumped in no-man's land, or casted adrift on small ships on the Danube. Jews who failed to leave the Reich were often arrested and endured internment in concentration camps under horrible conditions. Others were given false foreign visas by the Gestapo, despite the negative effects that these practices would inevitable have on the immigration policies of third countries. As a consequence of this policy, refugees aboard ships bound for the Western hemisphere such as the SS *Koenigstein*, the SS *Caribia*, and SS *St. Louis*, were not

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[37] Simpson, *The Refugee Problem*, 126-36.

[38]. See Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue*, 5.

[39] According the census of June 1933, more than half —57 per cent— of the 98,747 foreign Jews living in the Reich were Polish subjects. The Polish Republic showed no interest in them, and indeed hindered their return through several administrative measures that culminated in the laws of March and October 1938, by which most Polish Jews living abroad lost their Polish citizenship. Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), 266-8.

allowed to set foot at destination because their visas had no real validity.[40]

But Austrian Jews were not passive victims to their fate, as they attempted to overcome immigration barriers by means of vocational retraining. During the next two years after the 'Anschluss', 24,000 Jewish men and women trained in domestic service (4,351), and the clothing (3,473), and metal (2,409) industries. Many began taking Spanish lessons hoping that this would increase their chances of admission to countries in Latin America. Unfortunately, these efforts proved futile in the majority of cases, as recipient countries continued to restrict the admission of refugees.[41]

But Hitler's thirst for expansion did not stop with Austria: in October 1938, the occupation of the German-speaking border regions of Czechoslovakia (*Sudetenland*) increased the number of Jews under Nazis rule in 120,000 individuals. From this figure, 20,000 fled almost immediately to the remaining territory of the Czechoslovak Republic.

The most violent episode of Nazi antisemitic persecution during 1938, however, unfolded during the pogroms of 9-11 November 1938 ('*Kristallnacht*'). The Nazi party used the assassination of the German diplomat Ernst vom Rath at the hands of Herschel Grynszpan, a Polish-Jewish refugee in his teens, as pretext to unleash a state-sponsored pogrom across the entire nation. Synagogues, offices, commercial stores, and private homes were looted or set afire as a consequence of systematic violence against Jews, whom the Nazi regime held collectively responsible for the devastation caused by state initiative. Indeed, Jews were collectively penalised with an exorbitant fine of one billion RM. In addition to the material loses, thousands were arrested and confined in concentration camps. Meanwhile, Hitler's Government continued to pass anti-Jewish legislation such as the Decree concerning the Elimination of the Jews form German Economic Life (23 November 1938), which barred Jews from retail and handcraft activities.

On 24 January 1939, Field Marshall Hermann Göring instructed Reinhard Heydrich, as chief of the Reich's Main Security Office, or

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[40] Wischnitzer, *To Dwell in Safety*, 195-8.
[41] Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 35-6.

Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA), to establish the Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration (*Reichszentrale für jüdische Auswanderung*) in order to force the emigration of Jews 'by all possible means'.[42] The next day, a circular from the German Foreign Ministry stated it clearly: 'the ultimate aim of Germany's Jewish policy is the emigration of all Jews living in German territory'.[43] Thereafter, the number of Jews fleeing the Reich skyrocketed.

In March 1939, another wave of emigration followed the German occupation and dissolution of Czechoslovakia, and the creation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. In July, Eichmann's Central Office for Jewish Emigration opened a branch in Prague, forcing the migration of 100,000 Jewish persons by the end of 1940. Additionally, it is estimated that at least 15,000 Jews fled the neighbouring puppet-state of Slovakia, which had sided with the Axis following threats that the country would otherwise be partitioned between Hungary and Poland.[44] As a result, the total number of Jewish persons who fled Hitler's empire between 1933 and October 1939 ranges —depending on the source— between 360,000 and 420,000.[45]

In Holocaust historiography, there is the widespread notion that German authorities treated the matter of forced Jewish emigration very inconsistently. One of the main arguments is that the Nazis did not make any effort to remove the many economic obstacles that turned Jews into penniless 'undesirables', which, in turn, reduced their chances to migrate and promoted anti-refugee policies abroad. Indeed, the amount of cash that German emigrants were entitled to take with them decreased from 200 RM ($47) in 1933, to just 10 RM

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[42] Göring, Plenipotentiary for the Four Year Plan, to Ministry of the Interior (24 January 1939). Reproduced in Yitzhak Arad, Yisrael Gutman, and Abraham Margaliot (eds.), *Documents on the Holocaust: Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland, and the Soviet Union* (N.p.: Pergamon Press, 1981), 125-6.

[43] German Foreign Ministry Circular, 'The Jewish Question as a Factor in Foreign Policy in 1938' (25 January 1939). Cited in Arad, Gutman, and Margaliot, *Documents on the Holocaust*, 126-31. Citation is from 127.

[44] Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 37.

[45] Malcolm J. Proudfoot gives an estimate of 420,000 in *European Refugees: 1939-52. A Study in Forced Population Movement* (London: Faber and Faber, 1957), 25-6; Yehuda Bauer gives the figure of 404,809 in *American Jewry and the Holocaust*, 26; Bernard Wasserstein, on the other hand, gives a more conservative range of 360,000-370,000 in *Britain and the Jews of Europe, 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press & Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1988), 7.

($4) in 1937.[46] The law of 18 May 1934 introducing a 'flight tax' (*Reichsfluchtsteuer*) of 25 per cent for emigrants who took with them sums larger than 200,000 RM. The remaining 75 per cent of their capital had to be deposited as blocked marks in a non-transferable account whose financial worth soon dropped in value.[47] Besides the flight tax, the Nazis also imposed a special 'atonement fine' (*Suehnesteuer*) on all Jews possessing more than 5,000 RM, initially for value of 20 per cent of each individual's fortune, and later increased to 25 per cent. On top of this, Jews had to give up 5 per cent of their capital upon emigration as payment for their passport.[48]

But this paradox was not the product of miscalculation. It was a premeditated outcome of a policy which aimed at dehumanising Jews, exporting the 'Jewish problem', and destabilising the democratic world. Furthermore, as a result of widespread economic sanctions, the Nazis managed to enrich the national treasury at the expense of Jews, and to export penniless refugees who were condemned to survive on foreign welfare, charity, and relief. This, in turn, stoked antisemitic and anti-refugee attitudes abroad and led to the toughening of immigration policies.

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[46] Gerald Reitlinger, *The Final Solution: the Attempt to Exterminate the Jews of Europe, 1939-1945* (London; Vallentine, Mitchell, 1953), 10. Currency conversions are based on the currency exchange rates provided by R.L. Bidwell, *Currency Conversion Tables: A Hundred Years of Change* (London: Rex Collings, 1970), 22-24.
[47] Wischnitzer, 'Jewish Emigration', 43.
[48] Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 34.

The International Community and the Closed-Door Policy

When the Nazis took over in Germany in 1933, the world was still suffering the negative effects of the worst economic crisis know thus far. A 'closed-door' immigration policy towards refugees from Nazism was thus concomitant to this unstable political and social context. Another factor diminishing their emigration possibilities was the occupational status of the Jews from Nazi Germany. Whereas there were some job opportunities left in overseas countries for skilled factory workers and farmers, openings in banking, commerce, and the liberal professionals were rare —with the exception of engineers, chemists, and highly skilled workers.[49]

British Palestine surpassed all other overseas countries as a Jewish refugee haven during the 1933-39 period. Palestine's prominent role as a recipient country was favoured by both the Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917, as well as the Jews' longing for a Jewish national home in Palestine. This desire was also shared by the Jewish Agency for Palestine (JAP), which was the only institution accredited by British authorities to represent Jewish interests in Palestine. A further reason is that, unlike the rest of immigration countries which the effects of unemployment and the economic recession, Palestine enjoyed a period of economic prosperity during the 1930s which benefited from immigrant labour.[50] Thus, between 1933 and 1936, the Jewish population of Palestine increased from 234,967 to 384,078. In protest, the Arab community started a six-month general strike on 15 April 1936, which saw violent attacks on Jewish property and the Jewish community itself —who counted eighty casualties by October.[51] The British responded by appointing a Royal Commission chaired by Lord Peel to investigate the causes of unrest in Palestine. In July 1937, the Peel Commission presented a partition plan for Palestine and enabled the High Commissioner to establish immigration

[49] Wischnitzer, *To Dwell in Safety*, 172-4.
[50] Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 53-4.
[51] Martin Gilbert, *Israel: a Story* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2008), 80-2.

quotas.[52] Although the partition plan was never implemented, the White Paper of May 1939 restricted Jewish immigration to Palestine to a maximum of 75,000 persons for the following five-year period —a number which was significantly below the number of application requests made to the JAP.[53] On 25 September 1939, moreover, the British government decided it could not continue to allow the emigration of enemy nationals to Palestine, thus rendering illegal most Jewish immigration from Europe. As a result, the so-called *Aliyah Bet* ('secondary immigration') became the main form of Jewish migration to Palestine throughout the war.[54]

Although the United States was one of the few countries to absorb large numbers of Jewish refugees during the war, its immigration record during the 1930s is a completely different story. The 1929 stock market crisis left as many as fifteen million Americans unemployed, thus plunging the US into the 'Great Depression'. With so many jobless citizens, US immigration policies became the target of a series of reforms. On 8 September 1930, President Herbert C. Hoover issued a directive instructing consular officials to deny visas to applicants likely to become a 'public charge'. In combination with the Alien Contract Labor Law of 1885, which denied immigrants the possibility to secure jobs prior to landing in the US, Hoover's directive meant that only the wealthiest migrants would be let in. This meant a fatal blow for Jews seeking to flee Hitler's Germany after 1933, who had been left penniless by Nazi antisemitic policies. Responsibility for their maintenance thus shifted to relatives and friends in the US, who could produce affidavits to assume financial responsibility for immigration candidates. But this also introduced endless red-tape complications for the refugees. In addition to submitting financial affidavits, potential immigrants had to present an unexpired passport, a certificate of good conduct issued by the police, a certificate attesting good health, a thorough financial statement, and duplicate records of all personal

[52] See also Penny Sinanoglou, 'The Peel Commission and Partition, 1936-1938', in Rory Miller (ed.), *Britain, Palestine and Empire: The Mandate Years* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2010), 119-125.
[53] Dalia Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust: Illegal Immigration to the Land of Israel, 1939-1944* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 6-7.
[54] Gilbert, *Israel*, 100-1.

documentation including birth, marriage, and divorce certificates. Even though American sympathy towards European Jewish refugees grew in the aftermath of the Austrian and Czechoslovak crises, the Roosevelt administration had to temper any humanitarian impulses as this was not politically astute in view of widespread anti-immigrant sentiments amongst the US population.[55]

But contrary to the move towards more conservative anti-immigrant measures observed in the rest of the world, the US government actually relaxed its immigration policies in the months immediately preceding the war. This was made possible after Roosevelt administration felt in a politically secure position following reelection in 1936 to push for a more lenient interpretation of immigration rules. Thus in the wake of the Anschluss in March 1938, the Roosevelt administration called for the international conference at Évian, and devoted considerable work to relax the US immigration system to the benefit of the refugees. Measures include the exempting of political and religious refugees from the 'likely to become a public charge' clause, and the merging of the Austrian and German quotas to a resulting quota of 27,370 persons per fiscal year.[56] As a result, nearly 38,000 immigrants entered the US during the 1938-39 fiscal year —as opposed to 17,199 persons during the 1937-38.[57] American Jewry, on the other hand, reacted by establishing the United Jewish Appeal in 1939 to conduct annual fund-raising events that went on to finance the crucial relief and migration work of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS).[58]

Within Europe, France was the single country that proved most welcoming to refugees from Nazism, as it opened its doors to approximately three million foreigners —of whom 50,000 to 60,000 were Jews.[59] Within weeks

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[55] Friedman, *No Haven for the Oppressed*, 20-23, and 43-50; Dwork and van Pelt, *Flight from the Reich*, 144-9.
[56] See Resolution No. 10,013 (24 March 1938); National Archives and Records Administration (henceforth NARA), RG-59, Box 17, 150.01; and Morgenthau Diaries entry of 22 March 1938; in Franklin D. Roosevelt Library (henceforth FDRL), Morgenthau Diaries, Vol. 116, Part 2.
[57] The figure of 38,000 includes visitors' visas and other special cases that inflated the original quota number. See Yehuda Bauer, *Jews for Sale?: Nazi-Jewish Negotiations, 1933-1945* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 30.
[58] Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue*, 15.
[59] Vicki Caron, 'Prelude to Vichy: France and the Jewish Refugees in the Era of Appeasement', *Journal of Contemporary History* 20:1 (January 1985), 157.

of Hitler's arrival to power, the French Minister of the Interior, Camille Chauteamps, stated that 'those who seek asylum and come to our country will be welcome, in accordance with the traditions of French hospitality'.[60] Indeed, by the end of 1933, the number of German refugees who had found asylum in France amounted to 25,000 —85 per cent of them Jews.[61]

The living conditions of refugees in France were regulated by laws regarding foreign aliens, and these laws became increasingly restrictive over the next years. Upon arrival, refugees had to apply for a residence permit (*carte d'identité*), and for work permits if they so desired, although there were few who succeeded at this. The Bureau of Foreign Labour only granted such permits to aliens who had residence in France for more than five years, and this was further complicated by the Ministry of Labour's law of 10 August 1932, which had established quotas for the employment of aliens in certain professions. To further protect the national labour force, the Pierre Laval administration issued a decree-law on 8 April 1935 that banned refugees from working in the garment industry without a work permit. Commerce and industry were still available to refugees, so long as they had resources to set up their own business and enrolled at the Court of Commerce's register. Some wealthier refugees were able to regularise their residence status in this way, but on 17 June 1938 another decree ruled out this possibility by making registration conditional on the possession of residence permits. Consequently, it was estimated that at least 42,000 of the 60,000 Jewish refugees who were in France by the end of 1938 had irregular status.[62]

Another challenge facing refugees emanated from the Ministry of the Interior's absolute discretionary powers over the expulsion (*refoulement*) of aliens, which meant that prefects had the capacity to issue expulsion orders to refugees without the possibility of appeal. Excluding the two administrations of Léon Blum's Popular Front government, which offered refugees some respite,

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[60] Camille Chautemps' speech of 5 April 1933 is cited in Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 131.
[61] Vicki Caron, 'The Antisemitic Revival in France in the 1930s: The Socioeconomic Dimension Reconsidered', *The Journal of Modern History* 70:1 (March 1998), 30.
[62] Caron, *Uneasy Asylum*, 210.

expulsion orders were widely issued. Refugees in this situation were usually deported to the Belgian border and imprisoned if found in violation of an expulsion order. The government of Édouard Daladier, who in 1933 had identified refugees as the 'Trojan horse of spies and subversives', was particularly hostile towards them.[63] On 2 May 1938, Daladier introduced harsh anti-refugee measures including confinement in regime of forced residence (*résidence forcée*), fines to undocumented persons of up to 1,000 francs, and increased prison sentences for refugees found in violation of expulsion orders from six months to three years. Paradoxically, the same decree also instituted two very important provisions in favour of refugees: the right to appeal an order of expulsion, and the right of asylum for those who could prove having nowhere else to go.[64] In the aftermath of *Kristallnacht*, the Daladier government also created a special border police to repel illegal immigrants, and ordered the construction of special internment camps ('*centres spéciaux de rassemblement*') to hold those who were unable to leave France.[65]

The United Kingdom, on the other hand, saw itself as a land of temporary refuge and transit, and not as a host country. Rather than formally adopting any specific refugee policy, the government's response to the influx of refugees after 1933 was to leave the restrictive British immigration system unchanged, even if the Home Office made some informal modifications in practice. Most crucially, it accepted the guarantee given by the country's Jewish organisations that no refugee would become a public charge, and that the Jewish community would organise their migration overseas. In view of the modest number of Jewish refugees who demanded admission to Britain, this arrangement worked to the government's interest during the first few years of Nazism. With the intensification of the Jewish refugee crisis in 1938, however, the number of applications for admission skyrocketed, and an overwhelmed British Jewish

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[63] Cited in Michael Curtis, *Verdict on Vichy: Power and Prejudice in the Vichy France Regime* (London: Phoenix, 2004), 60.

[64] Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 131-42; Simpson, *Refugees*, 49-52; and Marrus, *The Unwanted*, 145-9.

[65] See Vicki Caron, 'The Missed Opportunity: French Refugee Policy in Wartime, 1939-1940', in Joel Blatt (ed.), The French Defeat of 1940: Reassessments (Oxford: Berghahn books, 1998), 126n3.

community had to retract its previous guarantee in favour of the refugees. In May 1938, visas became mandatory, while consular officials were instructed to scrutinise applications from Jews and those with 'non-Aryan affiliations' during the preselection process. Only applications by leading scientists, artists, and the wealthy were to be referred to London for consideration. In the months leading to the outbreak of the war, the poor financial situation of the British Jewish community, together with the lack of potential countries of emigration overseas, meant that British Jews were no longer capable of taking responsibility for new arrivals, and had to ask the British government to interrupt new admissions altogether.[66]

In the Netherlands, the refugee population at the outbreak of the war was estimated at 30,000 persons accommodated in public buildings in settlements scattered across the country. Although the Dutch Government did not assume any legal or financial responsibility towards the refugee, it did much to help their situation. Thus, in 1934, a Ministerial Instruction recognised refugees as a category of aliens deserving special and sympathetic treatment. Although this lenient treatment hardened after the *Anschluss*, when only transients possessing visas and steamship tickets for an overseas country were admitted, cases of deportation of irregular refugees were quite rare.[67]

Belgium's refugee record looks similarly favourable. By 1939, at least 40,000 refugees transited through the country, and by the outbreak of the war Belgium was sheltering 25,000 refugees. This was so despite the practice of the Belgian authorities of refusing refugees from Germany at the frontier during the first few years of Nazi government. Following the introduction of the Royal Decree of 20 February 1936, however, Belgium liberalised its attitude towards refugees. The decree established, for instance, an Interdepartmental Commission comprised of members of several ministries to which the Minister of Justice could refer any proposal for the expulsion of a refugee made by the

[66] Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 217-222; Dwork and van Pelt, *Flight from the Reich*, 144-9; Louise London, 'British Responses to the Plight of Jews in Europe, 1933-1945', in Michael Berenbaum, and Abraham J. Peck (eds.), *The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed, and the Reexamined* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press/USHMM, 1998), 510-13.
[67] Simpson, *The Refugee Problem*, 345-50.

police. The function of this commission was to discern between regular aliens and refugees, and to enable the refugee to defend in court against such expulsion order.[68]

Switzerland worried considerably about the influx of foreigners into its borders well before Hitler's arrival to power. Since 1924, the Swiss federal assembly had sought measures to tackle the fear of being 'overrun by foreigners' (*Überfremdung*) by reducing the proportion of foreigners living in Switzerland, and even establishing a special police department to keep the non-Swiss under control. During the 1930s, both the 'alien's Police' (*Fremdenpolizei*) and the *Bundesrat*'s restrictive refugee policies made of Switzerland a country of transit only concerned with 'onward migration' (*Weiterwanderung*). Following the *Anschluss* in March 1938, Jewish refugees began to pour into the country in great numbers and the Swiss federal council sought alternative ways to limit this influx. Not avoid harming the social and economic bonds between the two nations, the Swiss sought ways to deter the influx of Jewish refugees without the need to impose visa requirements to all German citizens. This crystallised, in October 1938, in the adoption of visa requirements for German Jews, whose passports would be stamped with the letter 'J' for identification purposes.[69]

Migration possibilities in the rest of the world were only considered by Jewish refugees towards the late 1930s, in parallel to the toughening of refugee policies across the globe. Immigration to the South African Union was greatly restricted after the Aliens Act of February 1937, only allowing thereafter relatives of persons who were already inside the Union. In the course of 1938, both Southern Rhodesia and Kenya also restricted the inflow of immigrants. In Asia, there were no major emigration opportunities for Jews with the exception of the Philippines and the International Zone of Shanghai. The only other government that seemed to stir against the tide was Australia, where fifteen thousand visas were made available for refugees from Greater Germany

[68] Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 308-9.
[69] See Salomé Lienert, 'Swiss Immigration Policies, 1933-1939', in Corry Guttstadt, et al. (eds.), *Bystanders, Rescuers or Perpetrators? The Neutral Countries and the Shoah*, 41-52; and Dwork and van Pelt, *Flight from the Reich*, 157-62; Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 285-301.

between 1938 and 1940 on the basis of 5,000 per annum.[70]

After the decisive events of 1938, Countries in Latin America also began to introduce restrictions to immigration, signifying an end to their open-door policy. Argentina and Brazil demanded desirous migrants to have relatives in these countries possessing sufficient financial means to act as guarantors.[71] Chile, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela granted visas in exceptional cases only. Ecuador welcomed immigrants who landed with $100 and could produce an amount of $400. The situation in the Caribbean was similar: Jamaica, Costa Rica and Nicaragua remained closed to immigrants. Barbados, Dominican Republic, Trinidad, Cuba, and Guatemala, on the other hand, required migrants to have considerable capital. Honduras, on the other hand, did only admit bona-fide farmers.[72] The Mexican Ministry of the Interior also decreed that stateless aliens would not be admitted into country, thus closing its doors to Jewish migration —only 2,000 had been granted asylum by 1945.[73] In February 1939, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay signed a convention aimed at reducing trade barriers which included a provision to further restrict immigration into those three countries, and to cooperate with each other in keeping out undesirable persons.[74] In spite of these restrictions, Jewish immigrants continued to pour in thanks to inefficient administrations, corruptible immigration authorities, and the widespread use of fake documentation. Paradoxically, more than 90 per cent of the 90,000 German-speaking refugees who migrated to Latin America between 1933 and 1942 did so from 1938 onwards, in spite of the end of the open-door policy in Latin American states.[75]

Whilst adult refugees were perceived as a potential burden to the state and an added stress to national labour markets in countries of refuge, children

[70] See Wischnitzer, 'Jewish Emigration', 35; and *To Dwell in Safety,* 187-223.

[71] Avraham Milgram, *Os Judeos do Vaticano: A Tentativa de Salvação de Católicos não-arianos da Alemanha ao Brasil através do Vaticano (1939-1942)* (Rio de Janeiro, Imago, 1994), 59.

[72] Wischnitzer, 'Jewish Emigration', 34-5.

[73] See Daniela Gleizer, *Unwelcome Exiles. Mexico and the Jewish Refugees from Nazism, 1933-1945* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 175-6; Daniela Gleizer, 'De la Apertura al Cierre de Puertas: la Inmigración Judía en México durante las Primeras Décadas del Siglo XX', *Historia Mexicana* 60:2 (October-December 2010), 1216-17.

[74] Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue*, 99.

[75] Patrick von zur Mühlen, 'The 1930s: the End of the Latin American Open-door Policy', in Caestecker and Moore (eds.), *Refugees from Nazi Germany and the Liberal European States*, 103-8.

refugees raised more sympathies amongst the population and did not compete for labour. By 1939, 18,149 unaccompanied Jewish children and adolescents —the upper age limit varied between 14 and 17 depending on each country— from Central Europe found asylum in various countries of refuge.[76] Most of these unaccompanied children migrated thanks to the *Kindertransporte* initiative, which began in Austria shortly after the *Anschluss*, and in Germany following *Kristallnacht*. Giving their children away was something that very few Jewish parents would have considered before 1938, but the tragic events of that year made many of them reconsider this possibility favourably. By far, the country that accepted the largest number of children refugees was the United Kingdom, which took in nearly 10,000 of them. Some scholars have argued that the United Kingdom's generosity towards Jewish children is inextricably linked to foreign policy considerations such as the negative publicity brought about by the White Paper of May 1939, which restricted Jewish migration to Palestine. A similar logic may apply to Switzerland, Belgium, and the Netherlands, where the initial quota numbers were enlarged on several occasions to accommodate more endangered children. By the onset of the war in September 1939, each of these three countries had taken in nearly 300, 1,000, and 2,000 unaccompanied children respectively.[77]

In the US, immigration regulations were also more lenient towards unaccompanied children, who could enter with fewer bureaucratic restrictions than adults. Thus in 1933, the American Jewish Congress (AJC) was the first to adopt a resolution urging the US to take some 40,000 German Jewish children. Subsequently, representatives of the AJC and the *B'nai Brith* organisation devised a programme to bring German Jewish children to the US that culminated in the establishment of the German-Jewish Children's Aid (GJCA) in April 1934. Within a year, a total of 146 children refugees arrived in the US under GJCA care, but the lack of funds and the scarcity of eligible foster homes greatly hindered the work of the GJCA thereafter. In the midst of the

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[76] These trains left from Frankfurt, Berlin, Leipzig, Prague, Vienna, Danzig and Zbonszyn.
[77] See Claudia Curio, 'Were Unaccompanied child Refugees a Privileged Class of Refugees in the Liberal States of Europe?', in Caestecker and Moore (eds.), *Refugees from Nazi Germany and the Liberal European States*, 169-191.

Great Depression, few American Jewish families could provide refugee children with the minimum economic standards required by US immigration laws and procedures, which required, for instance, a separate bed for every child in foster care, and no more than two children per room. This explains why, by March 1938, the GJCA had only managed to place 351 children in foster homes in the US.[78] Following the German annexation of Austria and the *Sudetenland*, Robert Wagner —a New York German-American senator—, and Edith Rogers —a representative from Massachusetts— campaigned for the entry of 20,000 German children into the US outside of quota restrictions. Unfortunately, despite several congressional hearings and public debate during the spring of 1939, the Wagner-Rogers bill was defeated and never came to a vote.[79]

[78] Judith Tydor Baumel, 'Jewish Refugee Children in the USA (1934-45): Flight, Resettlement, Absorption', in Simone Gigliotti, and Monica Tempian (eds.), *The Young Victims of the Nazi Regime: Migration, the Holocaust and Postwar Displacement* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 11-27.
[79] Friedman, *No Haven for the Oppressed*, 91-104.

The Iberian Peninsula and the Jewish Refugee Crisis

Prior to the *Anschluss* and the rapid escalation of Nazi anti-Jewish policy during 1938, the Iberian Peninsula had remained on the periphery of the Jewish refugee crisis. For the majority of German Jews seeking to migrate, neither Spain nor Portugal, with their backward economies and near absence of Jewish community life, represented attractive destinations.[80] Another important deterrent was the unstable political context of the Iberian Peninsula in the 1930s also acted as another important deterrent. Portugal had been a military dictatorship since 1926, and even though German citizens could enter the country without a visa by virtue of a trade agreement between the two countries, few German Jews took advantage of this treaty provision.[81] The Spanish Republic, by contrast, represented a more appealing destination for many Jews who identified with the progressive and modernising drive of the young Spanish democracy. But this favourable situation came to an abrupt end with the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in July 1936. Paradoxically, it was only whilst Spain wallowed in bloodshed that —owing to the violent antisemitic campaign unleashed by the Nazis during 1938— the Iberian Peninsula became a crucial land of transit, and the port of Lisbon turned into a most coveted destination for thousands of Jews desperate to migrate.

It was at the request of the Portuguese military that António de Oliveira Salazar rose to power as President of the Council of Ministers in July 1932, and became Portugal's de facto dictator in 1933. Salazar's *Estado Novo* was a corporatist, conservative, and authoritarian regime governed by a right-wing civilian elite, and influenced by both fascist and social-Catholic doctrine.[82]

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[80] In Portugal, the pre-war Jewish community comprised less than 1,000 persons. In Spain, the Jewish population by 1934 was estimated at 4,000. See, respectively, Avraham Milgram, 'Portugal, the Consuls and the Jewish Refugees, 1938-1941', in Cesarani and Kavanaugh (eds.), *Holocaust: Responses to the Persecution*, 357; and Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 45.

[81] The 1926 German-Portuguese trade agreement waived visa restrictions for citizens from these two countries. With the introduction of the red 'J' stamp on 'non-Aryan' passports in late 1938, however, the Portuguese were able to impose visa restrictions on Jews from the Reich without the need to abrogate the 1926 trade agreement. Irene Flunser Pimentel, 'Refugiados entre Portugueses (1933-1945)', *Vértice* (November-December 1995), 103.

[82] See Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses, *Salazar: A Political Biography* (New York: Enigma Books, 2009), 114-6; and António Costa Pinto, *Salazar's Dictatorship and European Fascism: Problems of*

Xenophobia was another key element of the new regime, which considered foreigners and their 'modern' ideas a dangerous source of social and political unrest. As early as January 1933, the Salazarist government introduced visa requirements for citizens from countries without a bilateral free-trade agreement with Portugal, and barred entry to the destitute, the homeless, and the 'undesirables'.[83] Who exactly belonged in this category was to be defined, as the government saw fit, over the following years. The first group to join the list of 'undesirables' were the so-called *Ostjuden*, Polish Jews who had settled in Germany decades before being forced to migrate by the Nazi government. From April 1934, the Portuguese government made the concession of visas to Polish Jews conditional on previous consultation to the Portuguese secret police, the *Polícia de Vigilância e Defesa do Estado* (PVDE).[84] In May 1935, these restrictions were extended to all stateless persons, and in July, to Nansen passport-holders and persons born in Russia and the Baltic states.[85]

Although Salazar's restrictive immigration policies affected Jewish refugees primarily, most scholars agree that these measures were manifestations of anti-immigrant feelings that were ubiquitous at the time, and that antisemitism was neither an inherent ideological component of the Salazarist regime, nor was it prevalent —with the exception of a number of far-right intellectuals influenced by French modern antisemitism— in Portuguese society.[86] In fact, antisemitism was not even popular amongst the Portuguese

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Interpretation (New York: Social Science Monographs & Columbia University Press, 1995).

[83] The decree-law, issued by the Ministry of the Interior on 28 January 1933, is cited in Schaefer, *Portugal e os Refugiados Judeus*, 68.

[84] Established in August 1933, the 'State Surveillance and Defence Police', or PVDE, was the main agent of social control in the Portuguese *Estado Novo*, and infiltrated many areas of national life in search for Communist and liberal elements. In charge of border control and the issuance of visas and residence permits, the PVDE kept detailed records of all foreigners in Portugal. After 1945, the PVDE was refashioned into the *Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado* (PIDE), or 'International and State Defence Police'. See Tom Gallagher, 'Controlled Repression in Salazar's Portugal', *Journal of Contemporary History* 14:3 (July 1979), 385-402; and Wheeler, 'In the Service of Order', 1-25.

[85] Schaefer, *Portugal e os Refugiados Judeus,* 68-71.

[86] Portuguese Jews had been rehabilitated following the collapse of the monarchy in 1910 and the subsequent establishment of the Portuguese Republic, and were fully integrated into Portugal's economy and social life. See or instance Jorge Martins, *A República e os Judeus*. Lisbon: Nova Vega, 2010), 89-153; Jorge Martins, *Portugal e os Judeus. Volume III: Judaísmo e Anti-Semitismo no Século XX* (Lisbon: Nova Vega, 2006), 123-190; Milgram, *Portugal, Salazar and the Jews*, 17-56, and Irene Flunser Pimentel, and Cláudia Ninhos, 'Portugal, Jewish Refugees, and the Holocaust', *Dapim: Studies on the Holocaust* 29:2 (2015), 101-113.

fascists of the Blueshirt movement (*Camisas Azuis*), who despite being committed national-socialists, frowned upon Hitler's racial policies and did not oppose the arrival of Jewish refugees to Portugal.[87] There were, however, a number of high-ranking officials in Lisbon who did certainly display antisemitic tendencies, particularly within the Portuguese secret police. The most notorious example is that of Captain Paulo Cumano, a Berlin-trained police official and 'certified' antisemite who, from his position as Chief of Customs and Border Services at the PVDE's International Section, pushed for an inflexible stance regarding the issuance of visas to Jewish persons.[88]

In contrast with this hostile anti-refugee trend in Portugal, the political context in Spain was relatively more welcoming upon Hitler's arrival to power. Born in April 1931, the Second Spanish Republic (1931-39) was greeted by many Spaniards as a regime that signalled the end of an unjust, corrupt, and decadent past, and heralded a new era of social justice and democratic reform that would lead Spain into the twentieth century proper. Indeed, the so-called liberal biennium of 1931-33 saw a tremendous reformist drive that aimed at modernising every aspect of Spain's social and political life: from the redistribution of land, the promotion of worker's rights, and the championing of state-sponsored secular education; to the reform of the military, and the separation of church and state.[89] For Spanish Jews in particular, the introduction of religious freedom and equal rights to Jews and Catholics by the constitution of December 1931 represented an end to centuries of persecution and discrimination.[90]

From the onset, the new republic showed numerous signs of

[87] This is Avraham Milgram's interpretation in *Portugal, Salazar and the Jews*, 55. António Costa Pinto presents a more discouraging perspective of Blueshirt antisemitism in *The Blue Shirts: Portuguese Fascists and the New State* (New York: Social Science Monographs & Columbia University Press, 2000), 226-7.
[88] See Mühlen, *Fluchtweg Spanien-Portugal,* 126-30, 140; Wheeler, 'In the Service of Order', 11-3; and Milgram, *Portugal, Salazar and the Jews*, 64-5.
[89] See Helen Graham, *The Spanish Republic at War, 1936-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 23-78; and Julián Casanova, *The Spanish Republic and Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 37-63; and Gabriel Jackson, *The Spanish Republic and the Civil war 1931-1939* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), 43-78;
[90] See for instance art. 3 on the separation of Church and State, art. 26 granting equal rights to all faith denominations, and art. 27 introducing religious freedom. Cortes Constituyentes, *Constitución de la República Española* (9 December 1931).

rapprochement towards Jews. On 29 April 1931, the provisional government issued a decree providing for the naturalisation of Jews living in Spanish Morocco, and in May, a synagogue was consecrated in Madrid for the first time since the Edict of Expulsion of 1492.[91] Although this royal decree was never formally repealed, Republican authorities considered it void of meaning in view of the new constitutional legality.[92] These pro-Jewish initiatives fostered rumours that the Republican government was planning the 'return' of the Spanish-speaking Sephardic communities of the Balkans and the Near East after more than four hundred years of diaspora, although this was never accomplished.[93]

Indeed, Manuel Azaña's Republican-Socialist government maintained a contradictory attitude regarding the plight of German Jewry upon Hitler's arrival to power. Before the League of Nations, Spanish representatives Luis de Zulueta and Salvador de Madariaga denounced the National-Socialists for their mistreatment of Jews in Germany and Upper Silesia.[94] Yet at the same time, Azaña's coalition government did place obstacles to the arrival of Jewish refugees while shielding itself behind protectionist arguments that were popular with governments around the globe. As early as May 1933, the *Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores* (MAE) —Spain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs— reintroduced visa requirements for German citizens and instructed its diplomats abroad to restrict whenever possible the influx of foreign 'undesirables' who could

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[91] Issued by Catholic Kings Ferdinand and Isabella on 31 March 1492, the Edict of Expulsion —or Alhambra Decree— gave Jews four months to either embrace the Christian religion or go into exile. Those who chose to convert and their descendants endured centuries of persecution at the hands of the Inquisition, and racial discrimination by virtue of 'Blood Purity Laws' that effectively turned them into second-class subjects. See Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* (4th ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014); and Joseph Pérez, *The Spanish Inquisition: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005).

[92] Isidro González, *Los Judíos y la Segunda República, 1931-1939* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2004), 111-32; and Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews*, 40–2.

[93] These hopes were founded on art. 23 of the constitution of December 1931, which pledged to extend Spanish nationality to 'persons of Spanish origin living abroad'. The only official attempt to implement this in practice is reflected in the circular order of 27 February 1933, and had the clear intent of expanding Spain's economic and diplomatic influence in the Balkan Peninsula and the Eastern Mediterranean. Marquina and Ospina, *España y los Judíos,* 91-112.

[94] There were many within the Republican-Socialist government who expressed sympathy for the Jewish people and the Zionist movement, such as Fernando de los Ríos, Minister of Education; Indalecio Prieto, Minister of Finance; and Miguel Maura, Minister of the Interior. See Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews*, 46–48; and Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 37-8.

contribute to aggravating the Spanish labour crisis.[95] Following the formation of the High Commission for Refugees Coming from Germany in October 1933, Madrid also declined James McDonald's invitation to join the discussions on the German refugee problem.[96] Perhaps to compensate for this obstructionist attitude, the Republican-Socialist government granted asylum to a number of Jewish intellectuals, scientists, and artists in an attempt to gain international prestige.[97] The most famous case was that of Albert Einstein, who briefly considered accepting the Spanish government's offer of a chair at the University of Madrid before opting for Princeton University.[98]

Spain's ambivalent policies towards Jews took a turn for the worse during the administration of the *Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas* (CEDA), a coalition of right-wing parties in government between 1934 and 1936. CEDA was a counterrevolutionary and anti-parliamentary movement that claimed to defend the principles of 'Christian civilisation' from the desecrations of the Republic.[99] Influenced by both modern antisemitism and Nazi ideology, the Spanish Right conflated Jews, Freemasons, and communists into the so-called 'anti-Spain'; the force supposedly behind the Republic's attempts to obliterate the 'true Spain', which they saw as inherently Catholic and conservative.[100] In this context, the CEDA government regarded Jewish refugees with special suspicion for fear of communist infiltrations, although this concern was not entirely the result of anti-Marxist paranoia. In August 1934, for instance, a number of Central and Eastern European Jews with communist leanings travelled to Spain under the pretext that they were attending a conference on Esperanto linguistics in Valencia. Unfortunately, incidents such as this helped

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[95] See note from MAE (3 May 1933); *Archivo General de la Administración* (henceforth AGA), *Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores* (AMAE), R-516/4.
[96] MAE to League of Nations, Geneva (23 November 1933); AGA, AMAE, R-515/7.
[97] See Raanan Rein, *In the Shadow of the Holocaust and the Inquisition: Israel's Relations with Francoist Spain* (London: Frank Case, 1997), 18-19; González, *Los Judíos y la Segunda República*, 142-85; Joseph Pérez, *Los Judíos en España* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2005), 310-1.
[98] For details regarding Einstein's migration plans to Spain, see Thomas Glick, *Einstein y los Españoles, la Ciencia y la Sociedad en la España de Entreguerras* (Madrid: CSIC, 2005).
[99] See Paul Preston, *The Coming of the Spanish Civil War: Reform, Reaction, and Revolution in the Second Spanish Republic, 1931-1936* (London: Routledge, 1994), 64-5; and Graham, *The Spanish Republic at War*, 30-1.
[100] For a detailed analysis of Spanish antisemitism, see Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews,* 49-58.

substantiating the view shared by many on the Spanish Right who identified Jews as communists agitators. As the number of refugees seeking asylum continued to increase, the CEDA government further restricted the influx of Jews by imposing stricter immigration controls as well as the need for financial guarantors within the country.[101]

Those Jewish refugees who managed to migrate to Spain settled across several regions. A small number established themselves in Madrid and smaller cities such as San Sebastián, Bilbao, Málaga, Valencia, Alicante, Seville, and Granada.[102] The most affluent Jews —mainly retired professionals, pacifists, and other intellectuals seeking freedom and repose in this 'alternative scene' away from the Third Reich— found asylum in the Balearic islands of Mallorca and Ibiza. Amongst the most notable guests of the Balearic archipelago were philosopher Walter Benjamin, poet Erich Arendt, authors Franz Blei and Karl Otten, and 'degenerate' artists Alfred Otto Wolfgang Schulze ('Wols'), and Arthur Segal.[103]

But the most popular refugee haven was Barcelona, one of Spain's most international and industrially developed cities. By 1933, Barcelona was home to about 800 Jews. In terms of social status and ethnic background, there were two main demographics: a prosperous local Jewish community of Spanish Sephardim; and a more modest 'community of brothers' (*Agudad Ahim*) consisting of craftsmen and small merchants of Turkish and Balkan Sephardic origin who settled in Barcelona after the Great War.[104] Within the first year of Nazi rule in Germany, Barcelona's commercial and industrial activity attracted no less than 3,000 Jewish refugees, and by the eve of the July 1936 military coup, the city's foreign Jewish population may have reached 5,000 people.[105] Many refugees established small businesses or earned a living as peddlers, while others pursued trades in economic fields as disparate as the beer and film

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[101] González, *Los Judíos y la Segunda República*, 189-96.
[102] Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 44.
[103] Mühlen, *Fluchtweg Spanien-Portugal*, 56-7.
[104] See Ojeda Mata, *Identidades Ambivalentes*, 98-112; and Rozenberg, *La España Contemporánea y la Cuestión Judía*, 143-4.
[105] The figure of 3,000 dates from March 1934 and is reported in Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews*, 58; that of 5000 belongs to Marquina and Ospina, *España y los Judíos*, 117.

industries. The example of *Ibérica Films*, a film production company established by two German Jews who found asylum in Barcelona in September 1933, is a perfect example of the newcomers' contribution to Spanish economic and social life.[106]

As the Nazi government expanded its vicious policy of confiscation, taxation, and sequestration of Jewish property, the capacity of Jewish refugees to subsist in exile rapidly deteriorated. This was not helped by the fragile economic situation and soaring unemployment in Spain. Claiming to protect the national labour workforce, the CEDA's Ministry of Labour restricted the issuance of work permits to aliens and barred them from peddling and petty trading, from which the poorer refugees made their living.[107] Many penniless Jews received assistance from HICEM, which offered relief to refugees in Madrid and Barcelona through a branch organisation named *Ezra* ('help').[108] In addition to providing financial assistance to about 500 Jewish refugees by 1934, HICEM also helped refugees integrate in Spanish economy, and assisted in their migration to countries overseas.[109]

Government attitudes towards Jewish refugees liberalised following the victory of the Popular Front in the elections of February 1936. In contrast with its predecessor, Manuel Azaña's left-wing coalition opposed the deportation of Jewish refugees, and introduced several measures to facilitate their integration in Spanish society. This, in turn, fomented the conspiracy theories held by many in the Spanish Right, who claimed that the Spanish democracy had fallen prey to a 'Judeo-Masonic-Bolshevik' conspiracy aimed at the destruction of the

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[106] See Manu Valentín, 'El Exilio Judeoasquenazí en Barcelona (1933-1945). Un Rompecabezas que pide ser Esclarecido'. *Entremons. UPF Journal of World History* 6 (June 2014), 1-33.

[107] Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews,* 58-9.

[108] HICEM is the acronym for HIAS, JCA, and Emigdirect, three Jewish organisation that merged in 1927. The HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) was based in New York, and assisted Jews migrate to the US. The JCA (Jewish Colonization Association) was a British charity with office in Paris that helped European Jews reach South America, Canada, and Palestine. Lastly, Emigdirect (United Jewish Emigration Committee) was a Jewish charity from Berlin. After Emigdirect dropped out in 1934 and JCA was restricted to using its funds exclusively in Britain, HICEM became effectively the international arm of HIAS. While HICEM focused on financing and assisting the emigration of Nazi-persecuted Jews from Europe, HIAS continued its European activities while imploring governments in the Western Hemisphere to open their doors to Jewish refugees from Europe. Although HICEM was dissolved in 1945, HIAS is active still today.

[109] Bentwich, *The Refugees from Germany*, 118-9.

Spanish nation. Paradoxically, it was on the basis of these conjectures that Spanish ultraconservatives —soon to be known as 'Nationalists'— began plotting their own 'Crusade' against the republican government, and staged the military coup of 18 July 1936.[110]

As seen from Salazar's conservative government, the formation of the Popular Front government in Spain —which amalgamated socialists, communists, anarchists, and Trotskyists amongst other political forces— posed a serious threat to the stability of the Portuguese *Estado Novo*, which responded by intensifying its fascistic and repressive nature. Hence during the year 1936, Salazar —who was already President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Finances— also became Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of War.[111] Further, in May and September 1936 respectively, the Salazarist regime established the *Hitlerjugend*-inspired uniformed youth movement *Mocidade Portuguesa*, which was compulsory for males aged 7 to 14; and the Portuguese Legion (*Legião Portuguesa*), a paramilitary organisation tasked with defending the state from the communist and anarchist threats.[112]

Following the onset of the Spanish Civil War in July, Salazar's regime sided with the Spanish rebel army, and launched a 'Crusade' of its own that led to the mass incarceration of persons considered politically dangerous.[113] The policies of the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs towards refugees were no exception to this trend. On 24 March 1936, the *Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros* (MNE) introduced three kinds of visas for incoming foreigners: permanent residence visas, tourist visas valid for thirty days, and transit visas valid for forty-eight hours. Excluding immigrants of 'outstanding' status whose visas continued to be issued by MNE, the granting of visas became competence of the Portuguese Secret Police, or PVDE. In June, the Ministry of Interior

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110 Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews*, 63-4.
111 Fernando Rosas, *Portugal e a Guerra Civil de Espahna* (Lisbon: Edições Colibri, 1998), 8-9.
112 See for instance Simon Kuin, 'A Mocidade Portuguesa nos Anos 30: Anteprojectos e Instauração de uma Organização Paramilitar da Duventude', *Análise Social* 28:122 (1993), 555-558; Luís Nuno Rodrigues, 'The Creation of the Portuguese Legion in 1936', *Luso-Brazilian Review* 34:2 (Winter 1997), 91-107; and Fernando Rosas, 'O Salazarismo e o Homem Novo: Ensaio sobre o Estado Novo e a Questão do Totalitarismo', *Análise Social* 35:157 (Winter 2001): 1031-54.
113 Maria da Conceição Ribeiro, *A Polícia Política no Estado Novo, 1926-1945* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1995), 80

advised the government to further restrict the entry of stateless, Soviet, and Polish refugees into Portugal on the basis that they were experts in 'espionage and international agitation'.[114] This recommendation materialised on 24 September 1936, when the MNE banned the issuance of permanent residence visas to persons with identification documents issued by countries other than their own, such as Nansen-passport holders.[115] Stateless refugees could still obtain tourist visas for thirty days —which could be extended to sixty with the PVDE's authorisation— provided their passports were valid and not nearing the expiration date.

In the wake of the bomb attacks perpetrated against the Salazarist regime by Anarchist activists in January 1937, the Portuguese police found the perfect opportunity to scapegoat the foreign refugee community for such turmoil.[116] Consequently, the PVDE ordered the expulsion of all German, Polish, and Nansen refugees arrived since 1933, and imprisoned those suspected of subversive political activities. According to the police order, those who failed to leave Portugal within eight days were to be deported to Spain, where Franco's rebel army would 'take care of them appropriately'.[117] When the British Ambassador to Portugal, Sir Charles Wingfield, questioned the Salazarist government regarding this merciless ruling, MNE Secretary-General Luís Teixeira de Sampayo rectified that his government did not intend to expel all refugees from the country, but only those of dubious political background or in possession of forged documents.[118] Although accurate figures are lacking, the founder and head of the PVDE, Captain Agostinho Lourenço, counted at least 1,409 expulsion orders issued to foreigners by the end of 1938.[119]

Despite the Salazarist regime's great concern over the presence of

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[114] Circular No. 1 of the MNE (24 March 1936). Cited in Pimentel, *Judeus em Portugal durante a II Guerra Mundial*, 56-7.

[115] Circular No. 8 of the MNE (24 September 1936). Cited in Schaefer, *Portugal e os Refugiados Judeus*, 72-5.

[116] The attacks of 21 and 22 January 1937 sought to sabotage the facilities of several organisations directly contributing to the Portuguese support for the Spanish rebel cause. This trend culminated, on 4 July, in a failed assassination attempt of Salazar himself. See António Araújo, *Matar o Salazar: O Atentado de Julho de 1937* (Lisbon: Tinta da China, 2017).

[117] 'Report from a Conversation with Sir Neill Malcom, High Commissioner for Refugees from Germany' (8 February 1937); The National Archives (henceforth TNA), FO-371/21277.

[118] Note from the British Embassy (11 February 1937); TNA, FO-371/21277.

[119] This figure is not restricted to Jewish refugees. Schaefer, *Portugal e os Refugiados Judeus*, 127.

foreigners, Portugal remained a marginal destination for Jewish refugees well into 1938.[120] In fact, the Portuguese were not even invited to the Évian Conference in July. This negligence was corrected on 8 September, when the Salazar government was asked to join the newly-established IGCR. Portugal only emerged as a decisive country of transit following the *Anschluss* of March 1938 and the brutal campaign of forced migration unleashed by the SS against the Jews of Austria. By June 1938, the Dutch, Belgian, and Swiss consuls in Vienna had stopped issuing transit visas to Austrian Jews due to the growing number of transients who failed to leave these countries whether because they preferred to stay in Europe, or simply for lack of funds to continue their journey. As the word spread that German and Austrian subjects could enter Portugal as 'tourists' for up to thirty days without the need for transit visas, thousands of Jews directed their hopes at the Atlantic country in a desperate attempt to migrate to a country overseas.[121]

Overwhelmed by the number of 'tourists' pouring into Portugal, the PVDE shortened the duration of tourist visas from thirty to ten days, and imprisoned those who failed to leave the country thereafter.[122] The MNE, on the other hand, began to look for a way to halt the inflow of Jewish refugees into Portugal without the need to repeal the German-Portuguese trade agreement of 1926, which provided for the free circulation of persons between the two countries. Ultimately, Berlin's decision to identify 'non-Aryan' passports with the red 'J' stamp from late September allowed Portuguese authorities to impose border restrictions on Jews without damaging diplomatic relations with Nazi Germany. Thus, on 28 October 1938, the MNE forbade the settlement of Jewish refugees, and made their transit through Portugal contingent on the obtention of transit visas valid for thirty days. This decree remained the basic directive regulating the transit of Jews through Portugal

[120] The British Embassy in Lisbon estimated at 300 the number of German Jewish refugees who legally resided in Portugal at the beginning of 1937. See 'Confidential Report on German Refugees in Portugal' (undated); TNA, FO-371/21277.
[121] Milgram, 'Portugal, the Consuls and the Jewish Refugees', 357-8.
[122] James Vail, AFSC Lisbon, 'Report' (20-22 April 1941); AFSC, Box 4, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, #184 to #455 (3 January-31 December 1941)'

until the end of the war.[123] Meanwhile, Salazar expanded the PVDE apparatus and trusted its International Department with exceptional powers to limit the entry of aliens. By early 1939, the Portuguese secret police had such control over immigration that shipping companies often refused to sell tickets to persons without written police approval —even if they held consular visas— for fear that such passengers would not be allowed to disembark upon arrival to Lisbon.[124]

Although the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War on 18 July 1936 brought to a halt the stream of Jewish refugees who had found asylum in Spain since 1933, Jewish connections remained instrumental to both sides of the war. The Popular Front government, on the one hand, sought to enlist Jewish support in forums such as Amsterdam's World Conference of Sephardic Communities of May 1938, and through the appointment of Jews to key positions abroad. This was the case of Max Aub, a Spanish author and playwright of Franco-German origin, who as cultural attaché at the Spanish Embassy in Paris sought the support of the French Jewish community, and placed Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* on display during the 1937 Paris International Exhibition.[125] Additionally, between 3,500 and 6,000 Jewish volunteers —out of a total estimate of 40,000 men— joined the International Brigades to defend the Spanish Republic from the fascist coalition.[126]

The 'Nationalist' army, on the other hand, received crucial financial assistance from Jewish financiers in Spanish North Africa where the military uprising was set in motion. Some Jews contributed to the Nationalist cause to honour generations-old family ties with the Army of Africa, but the majority of them did so to avoid retribution from the military conspirators, or were simply coerced at gunpoint. In any case, the treatment accorded by the rebels to Jews in Spanish North Africa was far from friendly. In the Spanish North-African

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[123] Circular No. 10 of the MNE (28 October 1938). Cited in Schaefer, *Portugal e os Refugiados Judeus*, 132-4.

[124] Milgram, *Portugal, Salazar and the Jews,* 63-67.

[125] González, *Los Judíos y la Segunda República*, 277-301

[126] The lower estimate of 3,500-4,000 is from Gerben Zaagsma, *Jewish Volunteers, the International Brigades and the Spanish Civil War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 2. The figure of 6,000 is from Arno Lustiger, *Schalom Libertad! Juden im spanischen Bürgerkrieg* (Berlin: Aufbau Taschenbuch, 2001), 61-6.

enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, which were home to 6,000 Jews, the Nationalists carried out a systematic purge of anti-Francoist elements. Jews affiliated to Republican parties endured torture and public humiliation through methods reminiscent of the Spanish Inquisition, before being ultimately shot. Additionally, Jewish communities were heavily taxed, their synagogues closed, and dozens were sent to forced labour camps.[127]

In mainland Spain, Jewish refugees from Nazism endured considerable distress in both zones of the war, although to a varying degree. In territories loyal to the Republic, such as Madrid and Barcelona, government authorities struggled to contain the revolutionary militias, who demanded the imprisonment of all German citizens whether Jewish or not.[128] By April 1938, at least 394 German Jewish refugees had migrated from Spain with HICEM's assistance, although there were many others who migrated on their own.[129] Some of the wealthiest Spanish Jewish families also left Republican Spain for fear that their property might be confiscated. Amongst those who stayed were the poorer Sephardic Jews of Balkan and Turkish origin, and a number of German Jews who took up arms to defend the Spanish Republic. Despite the wave of anticlerical violence unleashed by the leftist revolutionaries against Church property, however, the Barcelona synagogue continued to function. In territories under Nationalist control, by contrast, antisemitic persecution was often promoted by rebel authorities even though it was not systematically applied. General Gonzalo Queipo de Llano, one of the most notorious antisemites in the rebel army, imposed a fine of 138,000 pesetas on the small Jewish Community of Seville. In Zaragoza, nationalist authorities confiscated an entire department store that had been established by Jewish refugees.[130]

[127] For the consequences of the July 1936 uprising in Spanish North Africa see Isidro González, *Los Judíos y la Guerra Civil Española* (Madrid: Hebraica Ediciones, 2009), 31-80, and 153-195; and Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews*, 84-9. See also Bernhard Kahn, JDC Paris, to Hyman, Executive Director JDC (10 May 1937); American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Records of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1933-1944 (henceforth JDC), Reel 59, Folder 745.
[128] See 'Letter of Madame T., German refugee in Barcelona' [ca. 1938]; Yiddish Scientific Institute Archives (YIVO), RG-245.4, Series I, File XII, MKM-15.36, Spain-1.
[129] 'Activité de la HICEM en faveur des réfugiés d'Espagne, de Julliet 1936 à Avril 1938' [ca. 1938]; YIVO, RG-245.4, Series I, File XII, MKM-15.36, Spain-1.
[130] Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 47-9; Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews*, 82-4.

Shortly after the entry of the Nationalist army in Barcelona in late January 1939, agents of the Gestapo broke into the synagogue and vandalised its premises. When the Jewish Community of Barcelona sent a delegation to denounce these desecrations to the police, they were not only refused a hearing, but also threatened with the closure of Barcelona's Jewish cemetery if they failed to pay a large surcharge in addition to the annual rent.[131]

In the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, German Jews remaining in National-Catholic Spain were automatically regarded as communists.[132] At this point, migration was not available to many, as several German Jewish refugees who attempted to have their passports renewed at the German Consulate-General in Barcelona were denounced and imprisoned by their own consular officials.[133] The abolition of the previous republican legality also marked the end of religious tolerance in Spain, and the return of the 1492 Decree of Expulsion as the sole legal basis regulating the life of Jews in Spain. The synagogues in Madrid and Barcelona were closed, and the practice of Jewish religious rituals such as circumcision, burial, and marriage, were prohibited. Likewise, non-Catholics were barred from public office, and Jewish children were forced to study Catholic doctrine in school.[134] To survive Franco's Spain, many German Jewish refugees were compelled to convert to Catholicism.[135] The German Embassy warned the Spanish government of these practices, and offered to share details on the personal and political background of refugees.[136]

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[131] David J. Rodgers, British Consul-General in Barcelona, to Viscount Halifax, Secretary for Foreign Affairs (6 February 1939); FO 371/24154/2150.

[132] See 'Declaration of Madame G., Influential member of Jewish Community in Barcelone' [ca. 1939]; YIVO, RG-245.4, Series I, File XII, MKM-15.36, Spain-1.

[133] David J. Rodgers, British Consul-General in Barcelona, to FO (6 February 1939); TNA, FO-371/24154/2150.

[134] Danielle Rozenberg, 'Minorías Religiosas y Construcción Democrática en España: del Monopolio de la Iglesia a la Gestión del Pluralismo', *Reis* 74:96 (1996), 249-251.

[135] Natt. Liebermann, 'The Situation of the Jews in Spain under the Franco Regime' (undated); YIVO, RG-245.4, Series I, File XII, MKM-13.36, Spain-2.

[136] Oficina de Información Diplomática, San Sebastián (22 July 1939); AGA, AMAE, R-3462/2, 'Carpeta Judíos'.

Chapter Two:

Escaping France, 1940-42

France: Internment and Persecution

Despite its harsh treatment of refugees during 1938, the Daladier government did not hesitate to make use of France's three million immigrants as the country prepared for war. A decree-law of 12 April 1939 required all male foreigners aged 20 to 50 to serve either in the French regular army or the Foreign Legion. But this policy came to an end following the outbreak of war on 1 September 1939. Owing to fifth-column fears, the government banned foreigners from serving in the regular army altogether, and dictated the mass internment of all Central European males aged 17 to 65.[1] Redefined as 'enemy aliens', approximately 18,000 German and Austrian refugees were confined to eighty '*centres de rassemblement*' throughout France, under primitive and unsanitary conditions, and with insufficient food provisions.[2] A number of these camps —Argèles, Arles-sur-Tech, Barcarès, Gurs, Prats-de-Mollo, and Saint-Cyprien— had been hastily built earlier in 1939 to detain thousands of Spanish Republican refugees who fled Spain en masse following General Franco's occupation of Barcelona on 26 January 1939.[3]

On 21 December, owing to mounting public pressure demanding a more liberal refugee policy both at home and abroad, French authorities decided to appoint special 'sifting commissions' (*commissions de criblage*) to identify and release internees who proved loyal to the Allied cause, while those with Nazi sympathies were to remain interned. This procedure was slow and inefficient, and at best conducive to an uncertain and nerve-racking 'freedom' known as *le régime des sursis* ('reprieves regime'). Refugees in this situation had to report to the police several times a week, sometimes daily, and queued up for as many as six hours each time in order to obtain a rubber-stamp that granted them the right to stay a further day, or a week, depending on the mood of the police clerk

[1] Caron, 'The Missed Opportunity', 126-7.
[2] Françoise Joly, Jean-Baptiste Joly, and Jean-Philippe Mathieu, 'Les Camps d'Internements en France de Septembre 1939 à mai 1940', in Gilbert Badia (ed.), *Les Barbelés de l'Exil* (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1979), 169-208.
[3] By mid-March 1939, the number of Spanish refugees interned in these camps reached 226,000. Grynberg, *Les Camps de la Honte*, 40-41.

behind the desk.[4]

To avoid internment and this bureaucratic torture, many saw no better alternative than to join the French war effort for the duration of the war as *Engagés Volontaires pour la Durée de la Guerre* (EVDG). Those with national armies in exile —Czechs and Poles— were allowed to enlist with them. For those not capale of joining their national army —Germans and Austrians— the choice was between joining the very unpopular Foreign Legion, or enlisting for '*prestataire*' service in non-combatant labour brigades. These *prestataire* battalions performed various jobs related to national defence such as the construction of raid shelters, roads and sewers, but also worked in mining, lumbering, and the harvesting of crops as the situation demanded.[5] By the end of January 1940, 60,000 Jews —half of them foreigners— had already 'volunteered' for the French war effort in one way or another.[6] This is not to say that Jews were welcome in the French military, however. On 10 January 1940, for instance, the Foreign Legion command circulated secret orders 'to refuse from now on the enlistment of Jews in the Legion under a variety of pretexts'.[7] Antisemitic outbreaks were also common within Władysław Sikorski's Polish Legion, where Jewish soldiers were often cursed and beaten by their non-Jewish co-nationals.[8]

Following the German invasion of Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands on 10 May 1940, a new wave of fifth-column hysteria brought the previous progress to an end. The French government resorted once more to the mass internment of enemy nationals —for the first time including women— in so-called *centres d'hébergement* ('lodging centers') in Southern France.[9] In doing

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[4] Arthur Koestler, *The Invisible Writing: The Second Volume of an Autobiography, 1932-40* (London: Hutchinson, 1969), 511.
[5] See Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: Ktav, 1975), 61-2; and Caron, *Uneasy Asylum*, 253-4.
[6] Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 142-154.
[7] Cited in Caron, 'The Missed Opportunity', 156-7.
[8] See Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion*, 67-8; and Renée Poznanski, *Jews in France during World War II* (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press/USHMM, 2001), 20.
[9] Fifth-column fears were not exclusive to France. From April 1940, Great Britain interned some 30,000 refugees —mostly German and Austrian Jews— without trial. Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews*, 81-90. On this subject, see David Cesarani, and Tony Kushner (eds.), *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 1993).

so, France also lost a great source of manpower to resist the German invasion.

Two days after the fall of Paris to the German army on 14 June 1940, Marshal Philippe Pétain assumed power and announced the cessation of hostilities. Following the signature of the Franco-German armistice of 22 June, the three departments of Alsace and Lorraine were annexed to the Third Reich, while the rest of metropolitan France was divided into two zones —occupied and unoccupied— delimited by a demarcation line that soon became a barrier difficult to cross by either legal or illegal means. As stipulated in article 19 of the armistice agreement, all German war and civil prisoners in French custody had to be surrendered to German authorities. During July and August, a German armistice commission known as *Waffenstillstandskommission* (WAKO) inspected more than ninety internment camps and organised the repatriation of a number of German subjects, mostly militant anti-fascists who posed a threat to military security. However, whilst this commission demanded to know the personal details and whereabouts of all German refugees in France, it showed no interest in the repatriation of Jewish refugees to the Third Reich. On the contrary, in line with the Nazi policy of forced migration, thousands of Jews from the newly annexed regions of Alsace and Lorraine were deported to unoccupied France in October 1940: 6,538 Jews from Baden-Württemburg were interned at Gurs, and 1,125 Jews from the Palatinate and the Saar in the camp at Saint-Cyprien.[10]

The presence of unwanted foreigners was one of the most pressing issues facing the new regime of Vichy. Prior to German occupation, there were already 2,450,000 immigrants in France and a total Jewish population of 330,000 —of whom 40 per cent were foreigners.[11] Following Hitler's Western Campaign, well over a million refugees from Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands poured into France —of whom at least 40,000 were Jews. Many refugees were released or managed to escape in the chaos that ensued the collapse of the French Third Republic. Since most of them had no entry visas nor the right to stay in France, many were thrown into miserable camps: Gurs,

[10] Grynberg, *Les Camps de la Honte,* 136-45.
[11] Serge Klarsfeld, *Vichy-Auschwitz: Le Rôle de Vichy dans la Solution Finale de la Question Juive en France: 1943-1944* (Paris: Fayard, 1985), 178-80.

Le Vernet, Les Milles, Rieucros (women's camp), Rivesaltes, and Saint-Cyprien were amongst the most crowded. By the end of 1940, the total number of refugees still interned in the camps of Vichy France is estimated at 40,000 to 50,000 persons —approximately 70 per cent were Jewish.[12] There were many who did not survive the poor hygienic conditions, undernourishment (average of 950-1,200 calories per day), lack of access to potable water, and the absence of appropriate medical facilities, and fell victim of cold and epidemics. Additionally, prisoners at Le Vernet had to endure six hours of forced labour daily, and were exposed to frequent beatings at the hands of the guards and punishment through solitary confinement.[13] Thus, in addition to the 75,721 Jews who were deported from France between March 1942 and August 1944 (of whom only 2,800 survived the Holocaust), there were an estimated 3,000 Jewish refugees who died in internment camps in Southern France.[14]

In the occupied zone, German authorities introduced the first anti-Jewish act on 27 September 1940: an ordinance which defined who was to be considered Jewish —anyone who ever professed the Jewish religion or who had at least three Jewish grandparents— and called for a census of all Jews present in the occupied zone. This ordinance also required Jewish shopkeepers to place a yellow sign with the words 'Jewish business' in French and German, and barred all Jews who had fled to Vichy France from returning.[15] The newly formed Pétain government, on the other hand, introduced a series of anti-immigrant and antisemitic measures that reflected its desire to find a visible scapegoat for the French defeat and win the favour of the Germans simultaneously.[16] On 17 July 1940, one of Vichy's first laws limited employment in the public sector to persons born to French parents. On 22 July,

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[12] Susan S. Zuccotti, 'Surviving the Holocaust: The Situation in France', in Michael Berenbaum, and Abraham J. Peck (eds.), *The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed, and the Reexamined* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press/USHMM, 1998), 495.

[13] Arthur Koestler, *Scum of the Earth* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1941), 90-146.

[14] Serge Klarsfeld, *Memorial to the Jews deported from France, 1942-1944: Documentation of the Deportation of the Victims of the Final Solution in France* (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1983), xxvii and 612.

[15] Zuccotti, *Holocaust, the French, and the Jews*, 51-4.

[16] Julian T. Jackson, *France: The Dark Years, 1940-1944* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 355.

the Ministry of Justice announced that all naturalisations granted by virtue of the French nationality law of 10 August 1927 would be subjected to review. Over the next three years, a special commission examined the cases of 13,839 French Jews, and revoked the citizenship to 7,055 of them. Finally, the law of 3 September gave prefects the power to intern individuals considered a threat to national security and public order, thus laying the foundation for the physical exclusion of Jews and other unwanted elements.[17]

Vichy published its first *Statut des Juifs* on 3 October 1940. Applicable to unoccupied France, the *Statut des Juifs* extended the definition of Jewish person to anyone with two Jewish grandparents who was also married to a Jew, and excluded Jews from public service, the officer corps, education, journalism, theatre, radio, and cinema amongst other professions. The day after the *Statut des Juifs* was introduced, a further law granted prefects the power to intern all foreign Jews at their discretion. Meanwhile both the Vichy government and the German occupation authorities continued to enlarge the list of professions prohibited to Jews, and introduced new economic measures of discrimination aimed at the complete exclusion of Jews from French economy, such as the 'Aryanisation' of Jewish businesses. On 29 March 1941, Vichy authorities established the *Commissariat Général aux Questions Juives* (CGQJ), a public bureau that was to coordinate anti-Jewish policy in the unoccupied zone. Assisted by its first commissioner, Xavier Vallat, the Vichy regime introduced a second *Statut des Juifs* on 2 June 1941 that enlarged yet again the definition of Jewish person as well as the list of professions prohibited to Jews, and called for a census of all Jews in the unoccupied zone. Moreover, since the second Jewish status laws made no distinction between foreign and French Jews, it enabled prefects to intern all Jews regardless of their nationality.[18]

The treatment accorded to foreign volunteers in the French army after the fall of France was no better. Since the terms of the Franco-German armistice limited the strength of the French metropolitan army to 125,000 men, Pétain's

[17] André Kaspi, *Les Juifs pendant l'Occupation* (Paris: Seuil, 1997), 131-44.
[18] Zuccotti, 'Surviving the Holocaust', 495-6; and Marrus and Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews*, 75-119.

Ministry of War ruled that foreign volunteers were redundant and proceeded to their demobilisation. In complete disregard for their work towards the French war effort, foreign volunteers were denied a certificate attesting their years of service with the French Army, as well as the promised *prime de démobilisation* of 5,000 francs.[19] Instead, Vichy's law of 27 September 1940 ruled that all male foreigners aged 18 to 55 who were unable to return to their countries of origin were 'superfluous to the national economy', and were compelled to join the so-called *Groupements de Travailleurs Étrangers* (GTE).[20] Organised under the Ministry of Labour, these demilitarised companies endured terrible working, nourishment, and lodging conditions, under strict military discipline, and with minimal retribution at best. Next to thousands of Spanish refugees, Jews accounted for roughly a third of the 60,000 men who joined these formations in both French zones. In the occupied zone, the German *Organisation Todt* employed GTEs in the construction of 'Atlantic Wall' defences.[21]

From late 1940, many GTE units in unoccupied France were dispatched to French North Africa for internment in labour camps organised by the Ministry of Industrial Production and Labour.[22] Upon arrival to Marrakech and Sidi Bel Abbès, they had their heads shaven and received intensive 'training' at the hands of the criminals and thugs of the Foreign Legion, many of whom were Nazi sympathisers and thus gave Jews the most unpleasant duties.[23] These included work in stone quarries and coal mines in the desert, and the construction of the trans-Saharan railroad that was to connect the Mediterranean ports of Morocco and Algeria with Sub-Saharan Africa. This

[19] See testimony by Otto Jacobsen, German refugee interned at the GTE-9 in Im-Fout, French Morocco (26 November 1942); USHMM, RG-67.008M, Series I, Box 1, Folder 19.
[20] 'Loi du 27 Septembre 1940 relative à la situation des Étrangers en surnombre dans l'Economie Nationale' (27 September 1940); Leo Baeck Institute (LBI), AR-3987, Folder 5.
[21] Because release from GTE service was difficult to obtain, most of these men faced deportation to Auschwitz from the summer of 1942. Marrus and Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews*, 68-9, and 170-1.
[22] After the abrogation of the Crémieux Decree, over 12,000 Algerian Jews of military age who had lost their French citizenship were also forced to serve in *Groupements des Travailleurs Israélites* (GTI), a category specific to Algerian Jews. Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion,* 208-9.
[23] Ruth Fabian and Corinna Coulmas, *Die deutsche Emigration in Frankreich nach 1933* (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1978), 72-3.

project had been in the minds of French policy makers for several decades but was never realised due to the difficulty recruiting labour force willing to work in Sahara's extreme weather conditions. With thousands of 'superfluous' foreigners at its disposal, the Vichy regime saw this as the perfect opportunity to link the Mediterranean port of Algiers with the port of Dakar, the capital of French West Africa. The plan soon became central to French colonial prestige. Nazi Germany also supported the trans-Saharan railroad, as it recognised its strategic importance in facilitating the rapid deployment of Senegalese troops in the event of an Allied amphibious invasion, and in extending Axis influence closer to British colonial possessions in Africa.[24] Vichy gave green light to this project on 22 March 1941, and instructed prefects of impending measures to deport any remaining 'undesirables' to labour camps in North Africa. Following mass roundups in the streets of Marseille, more than 1,500 refugees were herded aboard the SS *Massilia* to North Africa.[25] It is estimated that between 5,000-6,000 refugees, a large percentage of whom were Central European Jews, were employed in the construction of this railroad across the Sahara Desert. With temperatures rising to 50 degrees Celsius in summer days and plummeting below zero during winter nights, mortality amongst these workers was so high that Vichy authorities saw it necessary to reinforce these labour battalions regularly. As noted by Tartakower and Grossmann, GTEs were 'nothing but a modern version of the slave trade', yet the only way for many Jewish refugees to avoid internment.[26] This was especially the case after June 1941, when an order from the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, Admiral François Darlan, informed prefects that 'no foreigner of the Jewish race' arrived in France after 10 May 1940 should henceforth be released from internment camps or forced labour units.[27]

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[24] See Zosa Szajkowski, 'The Soldiers France Forgot', *Contemporary Jewish Record* 5:1 (February 1942), 589-96; and Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion*, 67-8

[25] 'Vichy Plans Internment of Foreign Jews in North Africa; Round-up Intensified', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (18 June 1941).

[26] See Tartakower and Grossmann, 180-6, and 207-14. The citation is from 185.

[27] Cited in Serge Klarsfeld, *Le Calendrier de la Persécution des Juifs en France, 1940-1944* (Paris: Les fils et filles des deportés fuifs en France & Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1993), 94.

Relief and Rescue in Vichy France

On 20 November 1940, various Jewish and non-Jewish relief organisations united forces to coordinate relief in internment camps throughout unoccupied France. Among many others were the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), *Secours Suisse*, the Unitarian Service Committee (USC), and various national branches of the Red Cross. The resulting umbrella organisation, the *Comité de Coordination pour l'Assistance dans les Camps* (CCAC), became be better known as the *Comité de Nîmes*, after the town where all these groups first conferred. Crucially, the Nîmes Commitee was presided by an US citizen, YMCA delegate Donald A. Lowrie.[28] Thanks in part to its American connections, the Nîmes Committee gave French Jewish organisations a platform from where they were able to obtain important concessions from the Vichy government — which in turn welcomed their assistance in dealing with the intern population. Upon the Nîmes Committee's initiative, for instance, the government of Vichy recognised the refugee's right to receive mail and packages, and to have access to Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish chaplains. In the long run, however, the most crucial achievement of the Nîmes Committee involved the release of internees from French camps into supervised reception centres known as *centres d'accueil*. It is estimated that as many as 2,800 children were relocated to these reception centres, where they lived with greater comfort and dignity.[29] Once under their, it was much easier for these relief organisations to arrange the emigration of hundreds of these children to the US, or to find other clandestine means to guarantee their survival. Because of these practices, when the first deportations began in the unoccupied zone towards mid-1942, few Jewish children remained in the camps —mainly from parents who did not allow for the separation of their families.

Despite the multiplicity of relief agencies operating in Vichy France, there are two organisations that deserve special mention for their prominent role in

[28] See Donald A. Lowrie, *The Hunted Children* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1963).
[29] Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews*, 72-80.

saving the lives of thousands of Jewish youths during the Holocaust. Founded in 1923, the *Éclaireurs Israelites de France* (EIF) was the French branch of the Jewish pioneer movement, a phenomenon equivalent to the Christian boy-scout movement that flourished across Europe during the interwar years. Following the ideas of EIF founder Robert Gamzon, for whom loyalty to France and to the Zionist cause were not in conflict, the French pioneer movement sought to cultivate a sense of 'Frenchness' alongside one of 'Jewishness' amongst its members. Influenced by the role of the 'New Man' in communist and fascist ideologies, EIF placed the 'New Jew' at the centre of its ideology, and sought to transform a predominantly urban and bourgeois Jewish youth into physically apt generation of self-sufficient men and women with a strong sense of collective responsibility. Whilst EIF counted no less than 2,500 members before the German invasion, many more arrived from different parts of Europe during the war years. As a result, EIF slowly moved away from its French patriotic focus and its liberal understanding of the Jewish religion, towards more orthodox and Zionist tendencies. Following the French defeat during the summer of 1940, EIF's headquarters moved from Paris to a Kibbutz-like agricultural training centre at Moissac (Tarn-et-Garonne), which thereafter became the epicentre of the French pioneer movement. Over the next two years, EIF obtained Vichy's authorisation to establish nine more agricultural centres across unoccupied France, where hundreds of Jewish youths found a safe and meaningful way of life away from the horrors of war and confinement.[30] In December 1941, the EIF movement was integrated into the *Union Générale des Israélites de France* (UGIF), a national Jewish council created by the Vichy government to replace all Jewish organisations except those purely religious. Following the beginning of the deportations from unoccupied France in August 1942, Robert Gamzon and other EIF leaders decided to set up a parallel underground organisation to put as many Jews as possible to safety. Since EIF had been integrated into UGIF's sixth section —for the youth— this underground organisation became known as '*La Sixième*'. From late 1942 until

[30] Daniel Lee, *Pétain's Jewish Children: French Jewish Youth and the Vichy Regime, 1940-1942 (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 40-3.

the liberation of France in August 1944, this clandestine organisation will have an instrumental role in rescuing thousands of Jews of any age. Some received false identities, while others went into hiding thanks to a network of non-Jewish institutions and homes known as the '*reseau Garel*', or fled into Switzerland and Spain thanks to clandestine rescue networks organised jointly with the Jewish resistance.

The *Œuvre de Secours aux Enfants* (OSE), on the other hand, was a 'children's aid society' established in Saint Petersburg in 1912 by a group of Jewish physicians who came together to offer medical aid to Jewish children in Tsarist Russia. During the interwar period, as the OSE opened new branches in Poland, Lithuania, Romania, and France, its work shifted progressively towards the care for refugee children. By 1939, OSE administered six children's homes (*maison d'enfants*) in France where it looked after 1,200 German, Czech, and Austrian children. Following the occupation of France by Nazi Germany, many of these children were evacuated from the cities and handed over to the EIF, which integrated them into their pioneer units in more remote agricultural communities.[31] Thereafter, OSE played a pivotal role in granting medical assistance to Jews and other foreigners interned in the camps of Vichy France. From the autumn of 1940, OSE began to deploy volunteer doctors and nurses to provide medical assistance to the internees, understand their real needs, and defend their basic rights.[32] Most importantly, it was thanks to the visionary impetus of OSE leaders Andrée Salomon and Dr Joseph Weill, in charge of social and medical services respectively, that the Nîmes Committee persuaded the authorities at Vichy to release refugee children under the age of fifteen from the camps of the unoccupied zone into *maisons d'accueil*.[33] In managing these residences, OSE was assisted by various non-Jewish relief groups including the

[31] Frédéric Chimon ('Chameau') Hammel, *Souviens-Toi d'Amalek: Témoignage sur la Lutte des Juifs en France*, 1938-1944 (Paris: CLKH, 1982), 3-4.
[32] Georges Garel, *Le Sauvetage des Enfants Juifs par l'OSE* (Paris: Editions Le Manuscrit, 2012), 83-4.
[33] The Alsatian Andrée Salomon (née Sulzer), in charge of social services at OSE, had begun caring for German refugee children at an orphanage in Strasbourg in the aftermath of *Kristallnacht*. Dr Joseph Weill, on the other hand, was son to Ernest Weill, a much respected Grand Rabbi within the Orthodox Jewish community in Western Europe, as well as one of the most energetic voices within the Nîmes Committee. See Weill's own account in *Contribution à l'Histoire des Camps d'Internement dans l'Anti-France* (Paris: Éditions du Centre, 1946).

AFSC, *Secours Suisse*, the Polish Red Cross, the YMCA, and the the Protestant *Comité d'Inter-Mouvements auprès des Evacués* (CIMADE).[34]

At the beginning of 1941, the Vichy government decided to implement its policy of '*regroupement familial*', thus turning the camps at Rivesaltes and Gurs into 'accommodation centres' (*camp d'hébergement*) where refugee families with children were to be transferred from the many other camps in the French south. This made of these two camps the immediate focus of the Nîmes Commitee.[35] Initially, the main aim of these initiatives was to provide medical and famine relief. At Rivesaltes, the Unitarians of the USC led by Renée Lang ran a Kindergarten with a staff of more than twenty teacher volunteers, were refugee children could continue their education.[36] Slowly, however, the emphasis shifted towards rescue. At the avant-garde of these rescue activities were the volunteers of the OSE and the EIF, who worked under the leadership of Andrée Salomon, head of social service at the OSE. Salomon recalls that it was not very difficult to smuggle children out of Rivesaltes, since the wardens were not military men but civilians, and hence easily corruptible. Their usual modus operandi was to relocate the children to the shelters that the OSE had within the camp itself —which were outside the jurisdiction of camp authorities— and thereafter find an excuse to smuggle them out of the camp.[37] In fact, there were instances when camp authorities showed great willingness to 'get rid of these Jews'.[38] Whenever camp authorities hesitated to allow the release of Jewish children, it was often sufficient for the medical volunteers to claim that the child in question had some infectious disease such as varicella, which both French

[34] Among other locations, OSE ran children's homes in the *châteaux* of Chaumont, Chabannes, Montintin, Masgelier, des Morelles, Villa Mariana (Saint-Raphaël), le Couret, and the orphanage in Limoges.

[35] CDJC, MDXCIII, OSE (II)-14, 'Camp de Rivesaltes' (undated), 2.

[36] In addition to distributing milk, children food, and medical aid across the camps of Vichy France, USC also ran an important clinic in Marseille, where the Alsatian refugee doctor René Zimmer led a team of nine physicians and three dentists who offered free surgery therapy, dental, and medical services to refugees. Additionally, this clinic had x-ray facilities, ultra-violet-ray lamps for the treatment rachitic children, as well as vitamin supplements for the undernourished. See Joy to Dexter (2 December 1941); Harvard University, Andover-Harvard Theological Library, USC records (USC), bMS-347/49(28); and 'Memorandum: Unitarian Service Commiteee, Overseas Service' [1945?]; USC, bMS-16004/1(1).

[37] CDJC, DLXI-94, Testimony of Andrée Salomon, 3-11.

[38] CDJC, DLXI-78, Testimony of Isaac Pougatch, 10.

and German authorities were so anxious about. In this sense, the fact that some of Andrée Salomon's collaborators wore either a doctor's white coat or a Red Cross nurse uniform was enough to dissipate any doubts regarding the legality of their activities.[39] Besides OSE, there were other relief groups that succeeded in establishing small teams of medical personnel and social workers in camps across unoccupied France. During the fall of 1940, Ninon Haït and other volunteers from the EIF headquarters in Moissac were admitted in the camp of Gurs in quality of representatives of the *Service Social d'Aide aux Émigrants* (SSAÉ).[40] Two of the women volunteers who made children 'disappear' from the Gurs camp —Denise Lévy and Elisabeth Hirsch— were in fact instrumental in smuggling Jewish children into Spain in the later years of the war. Given that children under fifteen years of age needed no identification documents according to French law, these were usually sent to the children's homes of the OSE.[41] Those older than fifteen were provided with forged documents to support their new Christian identities, and were sent to the agricultural centres ran by EIF across unoccupied France.[42]

Unlike children refugees, adult men and women had less chances of escaping internment and, without proper identification documents and no access to ration cards, to survive daily life in Vichy France. For fear of contravening one of the clauses of article 19 of the armistice agreement —'The French Government binds itself to prevent removal of German war and civil prisoners from France'— camp authorities would hardly allow for release of Jewish refugees without explicit German consent.[43] There were, nonetheless, several subversive efforts to free Jewish inmates from confinement, even if at small scale. The earliest attempts originated from Toulouse, the 'cradle of the

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[39] CDJC, DLXI-62/63, Testimony of Jeannine Lifschitz (née Kahn), 3.
[40] Established in 1921, SSAÉ assisted foreign refugees without distinction of race, religion, or political affiliation. See Mengin Henri, 'Le Service Social d'Aide aux Émigrants', *Population* 29:1 (1974): 174-179.
[41] CDJC, DLXI-36, Testimony of Ninon Haït (née Weyl), and Nina Gourfinkel, 1-2.
[42] Between 1939 and 1941, EIF established its agricultural centres for Jewish pioneers in Moissac, Lautrec, Viarose (Tarn-et-Garonne), Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne (Corrèze), La Ruffie, Saint-Céré (Lot), Saint-Affrique and Villefranche-de-Rouergue (Aveyron), Taluyers (Rhône), and Charry (Bourgogne-Franche-Comté). See Maurice Capul, 'Une Maison d'Enfants pendant la Guerre, 1939-1945: Moissac', *Empan* 57 (2005): 20-27.
[43] Cited in Fry, *Surrender on Demand*, x.

Jewish resistance'.[44] Starting in early 1941, several Jewish resistance members of the incipient *Armée Juive* (AJ) who had taken courses in medicine managed to infiltrate themselves in the camps of Argèles, Récébédou, and Gurs as assistants to authorised physicians. Besides providing relief, their primary aim was to smuggle out of the camps some of the Jewish inmates, prioritising those who were young, able-bodied, and willing to join the Jewish resistance. They did so under the pretext that the inmates were sick and in need of hospital assistance. To justify before camp authorities why these inmates were never brought back, doctors would issue death certificates stating that their corpses had been dissected for medical purposes. At least 35 persons were freed in this way and provided with forged documents to support their new gentile identities.[45]

A more numerically important rescue network was headed by Abbé Alexandre Glasberg, himself a Jewish-born Catholic convert of Ukrainian origin. Glasberg had been hiding political refugees in his Church of Notre Dame de Saint-Alban (Lyon) since the fall of France, and subsequently worked offering relief to the refugees at Gurs camp.[46] Thanks to pressure from the Nîmes Committee, and most importantly, from Archbishop Gerlier of Lyon, Glasberg obtained a vaguely-worded letter from Vichy that allowed him to establish and supervise one *centre d'accueil* for every department in the unoccupied zone. As a result, Glasberg established the *Direction des Centres d'Accueil* (DCA), alongside Nina Gourfinkel and Dr Joseph Weill, representing EIF and OSE respectively.[47] In November 1941, a first group of 57 foreign refugees from Gurs were transferred to Chansaye (Rhône). When deportations began in unoccupied France in August 1942, Glasberg and his team were already running four reception centres in Rhône, Drôme, Hautes-Alpes, and Cantal, and were involved in opening a fifth one in Gers. Approximately one

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[44] These are the words of Lucien Lublin, one of the leaders of the Jewish resistance, in 'L'Armée Juive (A.J.): Objectifs, Finalité, Idéologie, par Lucien Lublin' (undated); CDJC, CMXX-42.
[45] The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary History, Oral History Division Interviews (henceforth OHD), (1)49, Interview with Claude Vigée.
[46] Lucien Lazare, *L'Abbé Glasberg* (Paris: Cerf, 1990), 47-61.
[47] See Testimony of Ninon Haït (née Weyl) and Nina Gourfinkel; CDJC, DLXI-36; and 'Rapport sur l'Activité de la Direction des Centres d'Accueil (DCA), 1941-1944'; CDJC, CCXVII-41.

thousand adult internees —roughly two thirds of whom were Jewish— passed through these centres.[48]

[48] Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews*, 74-6.

The US Committee for the Care of European Children

Since the failure of the Wagner-Rogers bill in the summer of 1939 —which thwarted plans to evacuate 20,000 children refugees from Europe into the US— no large-scale rescue attempts had been made in the US in favour of the younger victims of war. To a large extent this was due primarily to the indifference of the American public. Thus, when the Wagner-Rogers bill failed in 1939, two-thirds of US citizens opposed the arrival of Jewish children to their country.[49] Within the first months of the war, however, the proliferation of images depicting young victims of displacement and Luftwaffe bombings in the US media shifted US public opinion in favour of welcoming these refugee youths. By June 1940, 58 per cent of US citizens voted in favour of welcoming women and children refugees from Britain and France.[50] Leveraging this shift in public sentiment, US First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt called a meeting on 19 June to explore ways to bring orphaned and unaccompanied children from Europe into the US.

In early July 1940, the US Committee for the Care of European Children (USCOM) was established for the purpose of 'clearing the way for the admission of children evacuated from war zones in large numbers'.[51] Despite being a non-governmental agency, USCOM had Eleanor Roosevelt as its honorary president and received essential support from the Children's Bureau of the Department of Labor, which helped coordinate the work of the new organisation with other government agencies and with third-party foster homes and orphanages. On 13 July, officials from the State, Justice, and Labor Departments announced a simplified procedure for the arrival of refugee children in groups, rather than individually. This was a similar immigration arrangement to that one used by the GJCA in the 1930s, which provided for the admission of unaccompanied children under the age of sixteen in groups — thus waiving the need for individual affidavits for every child— and allowed for

[49] Gallup poll of January 1939. Cited in Robert Michel, *A Concise History of American Antisemitism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), 182-3.
[50] Gallup poll of 26 June 1940. Cited in Friedman, *No Haven for the Oppressed*, 98.
[51] Kathryn Close, 'When the Children Come', *Survey Midmonthly* (October 1940), 283-6.

their passages to be paid by an organisation.[52] Despite the initial aim was to save Jewish children, most of the rescue efforts during the summer of 1940 focused on evacuating British children to protect them from the bombings of the Luftwaffe. Although 848 British children reached the US under the care of the USCOM, these evacuations came to an abrupt end on 17 September, when the sinking of the SS *City of Benares* by a German U-Boat —which killed 84 children and 174 adults— forced the USCOM to direct its efforts away from the dangerous waters of the North Atlantic.[53]

USCOM's first trial attempt to evacuate children from Vichy France was done in cooperation with the Unitarian Service Committee (USC) towards the end of 1940. The Unitarian relief worker Martha Sharp had spent the summer organising the distribution of milk amongst children refugees, and was thus in a perfect position to cooperate with USCOM. In mid-September, Sharp was authorised to begin the screening process, and by October, she had already identified 50 children from 'the most distinguished families in France' whose parents were ready to let them go to the US. With support from YMCA representative Donald A. Lowrie in Marseille and from Eleanor Roosevelt in Washington, Sharp managed to obtain exit visas from Vichy officials and to overcome the Spanish and Portuguese immigration barriers. The group left Marseille on 29 November and after a relatively uneventful journey through the Peninsula arrived in Lisbon the following day, only to find out that the American Export Line had not honoured the spots reserved to them on that evening's sailing. This forced Martha Sharp to find temporary housing in an agricultural school outside Lisbon while the USC office in Lisbon desperately sought shipping space for the group before their Portuguese transit visas expired. In view of the scarcity of shipping space, the convoy was split between the SS *Excalibur*, which sailed on 5 December, and the SS *Excambion*, which departed a week later and reached New York on 23 December.[54] This

[52] See announcement from the Departments of Justice and State (13 July 1940); NARA, RG-102, Children's Bureau Records, Box 672, Folder: Refugee Problems.
[53] Carlton Jackson, *Who will take our Children?: The British Evacuation Program of World War II* (Rev. ed. London: McFarland & Company, 2008), 95-8.
[54] USC, *Children's Journey to Freedom: a Report by Martha Sharp of the first Children's Emigration Project* (1941).

experience proved that it was possible to bring children from Vichy France, although at a very high cost. Charles R. Joy, who had been heading the USC office in Lisbon since September 1940, thought that Unitarian funds would be better spent helping prominent intellectuals and anti-fascists escape Nazi persecution, rather than children, and therefore the USC dissociated itself from USCOM activities in the future.[55] USCOM, by contrast, was enthusiastic with the positive results of this first experience, and began a new partnership with another relief organisation with extensive relief experience in Vichy France: the AFSC. The American Quakers knew the ways of the Peninsula thanks to their work during the Spanish Civil War, and had good relations with both French officials and the rest of relief organisations in unoccupied France.[56]

From January 1941, all agencies involved began preparing the ground for the rescue of a first group of 100 children refugees from unoccupied France. AFSC was in charge of selecting the candidates for migration from amongst the children's homes of the OSE, the Rothschild group, the USC, and *Secours Suisse*. Transportation would be paid for and arranged by the JDC in cooperation with HICEM. Within the US, GJCA would take care of the reception and care of the children with assistance from the National Refugee Service (NRS), while the Children's Bureau of the Department of Labor would put approved foster homes at their disposal. Each agency played a crucial part in this operation, which surpassed the previous two experiences of USCOM in complexity and difficulty. One added hurdle that did not inhibit Martha Sharp's previous rescue operation stemmed from the Immigration Act of 1924, which required that non-quota visitors travelling to the US on temporary visas had to be able to return to their country of origin at the end of their stay. Unlike those from Great

[55] When USCOM began its cooperation with AFSC, however, the Unitarians could not help a feeling of resentment towards USCOM's new partners, the American Quakers. See for instance Joy to Dexter (8 February 1941); USC, bMS-347/49(22); Joy to Miss Niles, USC Boston (21 March 1941); USC, bMS-347/49(23); and Joy to Dexter (1 November 1941); USC, bMS-347/49(26).

[56] In particular, AFSC had a long and fruitful history of cooperation with the JDC. The two relief groups first came together in the spring of 1921 to aid the victims of the Russian famine. Since Soviet authorities had authorised the American Quakers to work in the affected region, the JDC proposed to 'submerge its identity in that of the AFSC' so that Quaker relief workers could distribute JDC relief supplies amongst Jewish victims of the famine. See Frances Fox Sandmel, *Brotherhood in Action: A Record of the Cooperation of the Joint Distribution Committee and the American Friends Service Committee* [ca. 1945], 6-7; JDC, Reel 45, Folder 209.

Britain and France, it was not clear in 1941 whether children refugees from Germany and Poland would be able to return to their home countries once the war was over. This obstacle was surmounted at the end of February 1941, when the Belgian Embassy in Washington assured the US State Department that German children in unoccupied France who had fled through Belgium would be guaranteed readmittance into Belgium after the war.[57]

Without delay, Andrée Salomon and the Quaker relief workers in Marseille began preparing a database to facilitate the selection process. This was done through questionnaires that were to be filled for each child candidate in order to assess the urgency and eligibility of each case. To the pile of forms from children cared by AFSC and OSE, they added those from submitted by the Rothschild group, Secours Suisse, and individual applicants. Each file included a description of the child's character and aptitudes, parents' location, languages spoken, physical and mental health, as well as the child's religious denomination. One of the main selection criteria was the child's potential for assimilation within the host society, having relatives living in the US provided further guarantees for a rapid integration. Likewise, the child's physical and mental condition were also assessed, as months and even years living in internment camps under precarious living conditions meant that some children were less likely to endure the long transatlantic journey.[58] Children whose parents were already in the US, as well as orphans with no relatives 'in any country in the world' were given priority over those who still had some relatives in Europe.[59]

On 23 May 1941, a first group of 100 children arrived in Marseille, where they were lodged by the Salvation Army and other Catholic institutions. Over the following week, they underwent the medical test, received their identification cards in lieu of passports, and arrange their paperwork with

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[57] I wish to thank Ron Coleman, Chief Archivist at the USHMM, for generously informing my knowledge of USCOM, and for sharing his excellent article 'The United States Committee for the Care of European Children (USCOM) and the Rescue of Children' (unpublished, 2015).
[58] Direction Centrale de la OSE, 'Émigration d'Enfants: Rapport sur l'organisation et l'activité du Service Spécial (October 1941); CDJC, MDXCIII, OSE(II)-303
[59] Service d'Émigration OSE, 'Note sur la Composition du Prochain Convoi d'Enfants' (March 1942); CDJC, MDXCIII, OSE(II)-318

French, Spanish, and Portuguese immigration officials.[60] On the early morning of Saturday, 31 May, the convoy of 100 USCOM children —together with their five escorts and 10 additional children cared for by HICEM— got on the train at Marseille en route to Lisbon. As the train stopped for a few minutes at Oloron-Sainte-Marie, some of the children were able to see their parents —who had been exceptionally released for that purpose from the nearby camp of Gurs— and say farewell for the last time. Georges Loinger, in charge of physical education at the centres of the OSE, has dreadful memories from that day:

> 'Since the children were not allowed to get off the train, nor their parents to get on it, they looked out of the windows even though some of the little ones could not recognise their parents anymore. Everyone cried. It was heartbreaking to see the children calling their parents, and their parents calling their children without being able to see each other. It was even worse whenever they managed to recognise each other'.[61]

The group arrived at the Portuguese capital around the midnight of 3 June and sailed aboard the SS *Mouzinho* on 10 June.[62] They arrived in New York on 21 June 1941. After this first success, there came four more USCOM transports. Due to the lack of shipping space, the second group departed on two different sailings. A first convoy of 45 children left Lisbon aboard the SS *Mouzinho* on 20 August, and reached New York on 2 September. The second group of 51 —and 5 HICEM cases— sailed on the SS *Serpa Pinto* on 9 September, and, after being trailed for days by a German U-Boat, arrived safely to New York on 24 September. The preparations for the next group took place during the spring of 1942. In this instance, 23 out of the 50 children in this convoy were Spanish orphans who had under AFSC care for years and were included in the USCOM scheme for fear that the Franco regime would request their extradition to Spain

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[60] Allen Bonnell, AFSC Marseille, to James G. Vail, AFSC Philadelphia (18 June 1941); CDJC, MDXCIII, OSE(I)-181.
[61] Interview with Georges Loinger; OHD-(1)62. My translation.
[62] Philip A. Conard, AFSC delegate, to Mary Rogers, AFSC Philadelphia (4 June 1941); CDJC, MDXCIII, OSE(I)-177.

or enact some form of retribution. To bypass Spain, this convoy sailed on 21 May from Marseille to Casablanca aboard the SS *Maréchal Lyautey*; and left Casablanca aboard the SS *Serpa Pinto* on 7 June, docking at the Port of New York on 25 June.[63] The fifth and last convoy of 35, which was organised in record time, sailed from Marseille aboard the SS *Nyassa* and reached Baltimore on 30 July 1942.

During the *rafles* of 16 and 17 July, the French police arrested 13,152 Jews —including 4,100 children— and confined them to the *Vélodrome d'Hiver* in Paris, under terribly crowded and unsanitary conditions. By 9 September, 5,000 children from both French zones had been deported from the transit camp at Drancy to their deaths in Auschwitz.[64] Prompted by the alarming situation in France, USCOM representatives and the organisations represented in the Nîmes Committee began to devise plans for the large-scale evacuation of Jewish children.[65] Dr Joseph Weill, chief physician at the OSE, presented their rescue programme to the rest of American diplomatic representatives in Vichy, with promising results. The legations of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, and Santo Domingo, were all enthusiastic about the plans, and agreed to admit several hundred children each.[66] The Argentinian Embassy, moreover, submitted a protocol to the Vichy government requesting extraterritoriality for a nearby park for the purpose of hosting hundreds of Jewish children in several pavilions, the cost of which was to be covered by the Embassy.[67] When USCOM requested the admission of 1,000 children into the US, the US State Department's response was equally generous. In addition to furnishing USCOM with blanket visas for the fast-track evacuation of 1,000 children from France, the State Department was ready to welcome up to 5,000 children if the removal of the first thousand proved successful.[68] It was on 26 August that the

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[63] It should be noted that the Port of Marseille was, until the occupation of Vichy France by the Axis in November 1942, the only port that remained operative in Western Europe other than those in neutral Spain and Portugal. For more details on this sailing via Casablanca, see Hélène Cazès-Benatar to HICEM Marseille (23 June 1942); CAHJP, P-129, File 62.
[64] Curtis, *Verdict on Vichy*, 189-202.
[65] OSE, 'Note' (August 1942); CDJC, MDXCIII, OSE(II)-304.
[66] There are no accurate figures regarding the number of children refugees that each country was willing to take in. Zeitoun, *L' Œuvre de Secours aux Enfants*, 144.
[67] Testimony of Dr Joseph Weill; CDJC, DLXI-104.
[68] Howard Wriggins, AFSC Lisbon, to Leslie Heath, AFSC Casablanca (10 October 1942);

US Chargé d'Affaires in Vichy, Somerville Pinkney Tuck, first brought these plans to the attention of Pierre Laval. Faced with the complaints of the American representative for the deportation of Jewish children, the French *Premier* sarcastically responded whether the US would be willing to take them all. Pinkney Tuck interpreted Laval's cynical response as an opening, and urged the State Department to counter with a formal proposal.[69] After several weeks of negotiations, the Vichy government agreed to the US proposal for the evacuation of 1,000 children, as well as to simplify the bureaucracy involved in their migration from France, on condition that the operation 'should not be made the occasion either for propaganda or demonstrations unfriendly to the Vichy Government or to the Germans'.[70]

Unfortunately, these ambitious rescue plans were frustrated by subsequent events. On 7 November, a group of 28 American Quakers left the Port of Baltimore bound for Marseille, ready to execute the evacuation of 1,000, —possibly 5,000— Jewish children from unoccupied France. Before daybreak the next day, the Allied forces launched the amphibious invasion of French North Africa —codenamed 'Operation Torch'. In retaliation, German and Italian troops invaded Vichy France, thus thwarting any children evacuation scheme. But this was not the end to USCOM's children rescue activities. The team of 28 American Quakers joined the AFSC office in Lisbon and began to prepare the evacuation of Jewish and stateless children stranded in the Iberian Peninsula. Overall, 309 children —mostly German, Polish, and Austrian Jewish children, and about 40 Spanish— were rescued from unoccupied France by November 1942 thanks to the joint efforts of AFSC and USCOM.[71] From early 1943 through the end of 1944, an additional 120 children were evacuated

USHMM, RG-67.008M, Series I, Box 1, Folder 21.

[69] Marrus and Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews*, 266.

[70] S. Pinkney Tuck, Chargé d'Affairs in Vichy, to Cordell Hull, US Secretary of State (3 October 1942): NARA, RG-59, Box 162, Folder 3.

[71] According to the OSE records, 285 children left Vichy France for the US prior to November 1942 under the USCOM scheme. See 'Liste des Enfants Partis pour les États Unis en 1941-1942' (29 May 1945); CDJC, MDXCIII, OSE(II)-311. Katy Hazan gives the larger figure of 350 children. See Katy Hazan, *Rire le Jour, Pleurer la Nuit: Les Enfants Juifs Cachés dans la Creuse pendant la Guerre, 1939-1944* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy & Mémorial de la Shoah, 2014), 71-3. The figure of 309, probably the most reliable, is provided by the JDC in 'Combined Summary of Sailings arranged by JDC during 1940-1942' (7 September 1944); JDC, Reel 80, Folder 369.

from Franco's Spain on sporadic sailings to the US.[72] Following the end of the war until its dissolution in 1953, USCOM would also place 2,849 'orphaned, lost, abandoned, or for some reason unaccompanied' children in homes across the US.[73]

[72] At least ten more convoys, carrying anywhere between one and 35 children each, sailed from the port of Lisbon to Philadelphia. Source material on this subject, however, is scattered across several AFSC collections and it only gives a fragmented picture of USCOM's work after 1943. See USHMM, 2002.296: American Friends Service Committee Refugee Assistance Case Files, 1933-1958 (henceforth AFSC Case Files), No. 7222, Jacques & Hilda Snyder, and No. 9721, Siegfried Godel. See also Conard to Frawley (7 October 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Refugee Services, Portugal: Letters from, Q series'.

[73] As claimed by the official USCOM historian, Kathryn Close, *Transplanted Children: a History...* (New York: US Committee for the Care of European Children, 1953), 48.

Emergency Rescue

Alarmed by article 19 of the Franco-German armistice, a group of American and German intellectuals gathered at New York's Commodore Hotel on 25 June 1940 to establish the Emergency Rescue Committee (ERC or 'Emerescue').[74] The ERC's mission was to save a number of scholar, artists, and prominent anti-fascists from persecution and an almost certain death at the hands of the Nazis. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt sponsored their project and pressed the US State Department to put grant emergency visas at their disposal. The ERC chose Varian M. Fry as its European director. A Harvard-trained classics scholar and independent foreign affairs journalist, Fry lacked any experience doing relief work, but spoke fluent French and German and was passionate about the work of many of the artists and intellectuals whom the ERC wanted to rescue.[75] Fry arrived in Marseille on 13 August 1940 with $3,000 in his pocket and a list of 200 names of painters, musicians, sculptors, authors, poets, and other intellectuals the ERC was interested in rescuing. From his room at Hotel Splendide (31 Boulevard d'Athènes), which was conveniently close to the city's main railway station, the Gare de Saint-Charles, Fry began

[74] In 1942, ERC merged with the International Relief Association (IRA) giving way to one of today's largest humanitarian organisations: the International Rescue and Relief Committee (IRRC), or International Rescue Committee (IRC) for short. The IRA, which had been created in 1933 by Albert Einstein and the leader of the Communist Party USA, Jay Lovestone, was in turn the American branch of a namesake organisation established by Einstein and other members of the *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* (KPD) and *Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands* (SAP) in 1931 to provide relief to victims of state oppression, especially from leftist groups such as the Spanish Trotskyists of the *Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista* (POUM), the German *Internationaler Sozialistischer Kampfbund* (ISK), and Trotskyists from all nationalities. See Eric Thomas Chester, *Covert Network: Progressives, the International Rescue Committee, and the CIA* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1995).

[75] A lot has been written about Varian Fry's mission in Marseille. See for instance Andy Marino, *A Quiet American: the Secret War of Varian Fry* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), and *American Pimpernel: The Man who Saved the Artists on Hitler's Death List* (London: Hutchinson, 1999); Pierre Sauvage, 'Varian Fry in Marseille', in John K. Roth, et. al. (eds.), *Remembering for the Future: the Holocaust in an Age of Genocide* (Vol. 2. London: Palgrave, 2001), 347-377; Sheila Isenberg, *A Hero of Our Own: The Story of Varian Fry* (New York: Random House, 2001); Rosemary Sullivan, *Villa Air-Bel* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006); Anne Klein, *Flüchtlingspolitik und Flüchtlingshilfe 1940-1942: Varian Fry und die Komitees zur Rettung politisch Verfolgter in New York und Marseille* (Berlin: Metropole, 2007); Carla K. McClafferty, *In Defiance of Hitler: The Secret Mission of Varian Fry* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2014); and Subak, *Rescue & Flight*.

the work of the *Centre Américain de Secours* (CAS).[76]

One of Fry's earliest and closest associates was Miriam Davenport, an American art student at Paris' Sorbonne university. Through Davenport, CAS enlisted the support of Mary Jayne Gold, a Chicago-born heiress whose generous donations allowed the CAS to go beyond its original scope and to offer protection to a larger number of names —creating what Davenport called the 'Gold list'. Another American heiress who funded Fry's activities on several occasions was Peggy Guggenheim, who claimed to have payed Max Ersnt's passage to America in exchange for one of his paintings.[77]

In October, Fry's team moved to 60 rue Grignan, and in January 1941, to larger facilities at 18 Boulevard Garibaldi.[78] Meanwhile, Davenport and Gold rented a large villa in the neighbourhood of La Pomme, on the outskirts of Marseille. Villa Air-Bel hosted many of Fry's protégés, including surrealist theorist André Breton, and Russian revolutionary writer Victor Serge, who baptised the villa *Château Espère-Visa*, or 'Chateau Hoping-for-Visa'. Other essential collaborators in Fry's team were the Romanian medicine student Marcel Verzeanu, and French resistance members Jean Gemähling, Daniel Bénédite, and Jacques Weisslitz. Every morning, each of the CAS team members interviewed separately the candidates for emigration. In the afternoon, they held meetings in which each of them presented the case on which they had worked during the morning, and discussed some practical considerations such as money allowances, visa applications, or ways to hide clients who were being searched by the French police and the Gestapo.[79] Unlike most other relief organisations, the CAS followed a policy of 'rescue by any means'. This often involved extensive cooperation with several underground movements and all sorts of clandestine initiatives. They helped refugees escape

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[76] The CAS is sometimes referred to in the literature as sometimes referred to as 'American Relief Centre' (ARC).
[77] Peggy Guggenheim, *Out of This Century: Confessions of an Art Addict*. London: André Deutsch, 2005), 227-8.
[78] Daniel Bénédicte, 'The Stages of the Committee's Development' (28 August 1941); University of Columbia, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Varian Fry Papers (henceforth Fry Papers), Box 4, 'Rescue work'.
[79] Daniel Bénédite, *La Filière Marseillaise: Un Chemin vers la Liberté sous l'Occupation* (Paris: Clancier Guénaud, 1984), 50-53.

from prison, hide from the police, bought visas on the black market, forged identity documents, and, most importantly, smuggled refugees across the Spanish border on their way to Lisbon.

One of the routes most used by Fry's protégés to cross the Franco-Spanish border is credited to German refugees Lisa and Hans Fittko, who although not members of the CAS resulted extremely helpful.[80] The 'F-route', as Fry called it to honour the Fittkos, was based on the preexisting 'Lister Route', which borrows its name from the Spanish Republican general who accompanied his troops into exile at the end of the Spanish Civil War. The Fittkos had befriended a French hotel owner in Banyuls-sur-Mer, a small village 10 km away from the Franco-Spanish border, who provided cover for refugees on their way to Spain. Verzeanu was in charge of taking them to the hotel rooms, where they waited until Hans Fittko thought it a good moment to cross the Franco-Spanish border. Upon arrival, refugees showed their Spanish transit visas to the Spanish border police at Portbou and were allowed to proceed legally into Spain.[81] Another couple who proved essential to Fry's work were French sculptor Aristide Maillol and his muse and Trotskyist sympathiser Dina Vierny, who offered their house at Banyuls-sur-Mer as a shelter for refugees crossing the Pyrenees. They advised refugees on the best route and guides to reach Spain, and furnished them with forged identity cards and French exit visas prepared by the Austrian political cartoonist Wilhelm Spira —'Bill Freier'.[82]

Overall, it took several days to reach Lisbon from Marseille. There were two main railway routes from Marseille to Lisbon. The fastest route passed through Cerbère, Portbou, Barcelona and Madrid and took about 3 days. The second option, which usually took a day longer, ran via Toulouse and Pau, crossed the Pyrenees through the Canfranc international railway station, and continued via Zaragoza and Madrid towards Lisbon.[83]

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[80] See Lisa Fittko, *Escape through the Pyrenees* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1991).
[81] 'Fittko Route' (March 1967); Fry Papers, Box 12, 'Operation Emergency Rescue'.
[82] See the typewritten memoirs by Mary Jayne Gold, *Emergency Rescue Committee II* (undated), 8-9; Fry Papers, Box 8, Folder 20.
[83] Fry, Surrender on Demand, 64-5. More details regarding the train routes and schedules between Marseille and Lisbon can be found in YIVO, RG-245.5, MKM-17.2, France II-22.

From October 1940, legal transit through the Iberian Peninsula became increasingly difficult due to the introduction of immigration restrictions by the Lisbon and Madrid governments. Alarmed by the increasing number of refugees who were stranded in Portugal, the Salazarist regime instructed its consuls in France to stop issuing transit visas to migrants not in possession of valid visas for a country overseas, or with visas for territories so remote that they were unreachable from Lisbon —such as Siam, China, and Belgian Congo. At the same time, the Spanish immigration authorities stopped recognising the *affidavit in lieu of passport* that the US Consulate in Marseille issued to passportless refugees, thus barring legal entry into Spain to most stateless refugees.

Spanish immigration controls also became more exhaustive. At the Portbou border control, some refugees were required to undress completely to prove that they did not carry any undeclared currency. Police controls aboard trains connecting the French border with Portugal also became more thorough, as did police surveillance in Spanish hotels, streets, and frontier cities.[84] Those found in possession of forged documents or lacking stamps attesting their lawful entry into Spain were forced to pay substantial fines and faced imprisonment.[85] Another obstacle facing trans-Iberian migrants was the unreliability of Spanish border policy. During the fall of 1940, the Spanish border would close and open intermittently in no predictable way, and when it opened it followed no fixed schedule: sometimes it would let migrants through for a whole day, sometimes just for a few hours. The demands of Spanish border guards were equally incongruent.[86] One well-known victim of Spain's inconsistent border policy was Walter Benjamin. On 25 September 1940, Lisa Fittko accompanied the German philosopher and other refugees to the Spanish town of Portbou. Upon arrival, the Spanish police told them that since they were stateless, they would be deported to France the following day. Demoralised, and not being able to repeat the ten-hour hike across the Pyrenees back to France, Benjamin chose to

[84] See anonymous refugee testimony, 'Rapport sur mon Voyage à la Frontière Espagnole' (10 October 1940); YIVO, RG-245.5, MKM-17.2, France II-26.
[85] Bénédite, *La Filière Marseillaise*, 73-6, 80-1.
[86] Varian Fry, *Surrender on Demand* (New York: Random House, 1945), 80-5.

end his life swallowing a handful of morphine tablets. Paradoxically, the Spanish police changed their minds the following day and allowed the rest of the group to continue their journey through Spain.[87]

Towards the end of 1940, a sea route connecting Marseille with the French colony of Martinique became the best alternative to the land routes through the Iberian Peninsula. The line connecting the Port of Marseille with Fort-de-France had existed already, but thus far was only available to French citizens. The Vichy government realised that it had no interest in hindering the exit of refugees from France, and became more cooperative in the issuance of exit visas. French shipping companies, on the other hand, saw this as an opportunity to palliate the wartime reduction of maritime traffic and make excellent profit by putting old boats to work. Upon Fry's insistence, the US Consulate in Marseille also minimised the formalities surrounding the granting of visas to the extent possible.[88] To defend themselves against the speculation of boat tickets, the CAS would pay upfront a fixed percentage of the tickets made available by shipping companies. This helped minimise the complications arising from the fact that shipping companies only announced the sailing of boats with four or five days' notice.

Whilst the Lisbon-New York route was faster and more comfortable, the Marseille-Martinique route involved further waiting at the Caribbean island for another boat to the US, Mexico, or Cuba. On the positive side, the Martinique route waived the complex formalities involved in obtaining transit visas for Spain and Portugal. Hence, on 24 March 1941, the SS *Captain Paul-Lemerle* took André Breton, Victor Serge, and the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss en route to Martinique. In a similar fashion, 90 CAS protégés left aboard the SS *Winnipeg* on 25 April; 36 on the SS *Mont-Viso* on 9 May; and 70 more aboard the SS *Wyoming* on 17 May. Although the Martinique route was only operative until May 1941, this was also the most intense period of emigration of CAS

[87] Joy to Dexter (2 October 1940); USC, bMS-347/49(19). See also Fittko, *Escape Through the Pyrenees*, 96-114.

[88] Albeit often depicted as restrictive and even antisemitic, the officers of the US Consulate in Marseille cooperated with both Fry's organisation and PAC. See Melissa Jane Taylor, 'American Consuls and the Politics of Rescue in Marseille, 1936-1941', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 30:2 (Fall 2016), 238-260.

cases.[89]

During 1941, leaving Vichy France by land became far more difficult than it had been during the summer. From the spring of 1941, Spanish border officials demanded French exit visas, in addition to a declaration from the *Banque de France* in order to import any foreign currency into Spain. Stricter border controls and frontier surveillance rendered Cerbère-Porbou border crossing increasingly dangerous, thus forcing refugees to cross the Pyrenees at higher altitudes.

At this point, Fry's contacts in the Allied underground became extremely handy, as it allowed CAS protégés to use clandestine routes developed by the Allied forces since the fall of France. In addition to helping refugee intellectuals and artists, Fry's office also assisted the evacuation of Polish and British soldiers who were scattered in France rejoin the Allied forces in Gibraltar. This network was jointly organised by the British Embassy in Madrid; the Pole Józef Wegrzyn ('Carlos'), who was in charge of the evacuation of Polish soldiers and was stationed in Andorra; and the Italian Randolfo Pacciardi ('Dino'), who rose to Lieutenant Colonel while fighting with the International Brigades and went on to become Italy's Minister of Defence after the war. Fry had been enlisted shortly after his arrival to Europe in August 1940 by the British Ambassador to Spain, Sir Samuel Hoare, who put $10,000 at his disposal on condition that he helped in this delicate rescue network.[90]

Varian Fry was not the only American relief worker in the region who had ties to the Allied underground. This was particularly common amongst the Unitarians, who were unapologetically anti-fascist and, unlike most other relief organisations, did not hesitate to contribute to the Allied war effort through various underground activities. Indeed, most of USC's top representatives in the region —including Robert and Elizabeth Dexter, Waitsill and Martha Sharp, and Noel Field— worked for the American Office of Strategic Services

[89] Bénédite, *La Filière Marseillaise*, 189-93.
[90] See; Aaron Levenstein, *Escape to Freedom: The Story of the International Rescue Committee* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983), 22-3; Chester, *Covert Network*, 16-7; Bénédite, *La Filière Marseillaise*, 93-8 & 206-7; and Emilio Lussu, *Diplomazia Clandestina* (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1956).

(OSS). Naturally, they also benefited from this relationship. Cooperation between the Unitarians and the US secret service was so pervasive that the OSS channeled correspondence between the USC offices in Boston and Lisbon via diplomatic pouch.[91]

Following Varian Fry's departure to the US in September 1941, Daniel Bénédite continued the work of the CAS until June 1942.[92] Amongst the 20,000 refugees who approached Fry's committee for emigration assistance, 4,000 persons who fell within the scope of the ERC's original mission received assistance from the CAS —a figure well above the 200 'first listers'. The list of those assisted represents much of Europe's intelligentsia at the time: philosopher Hannah Arendt, artists Marc Chagall and Marcel Duchamp, harpsichordist Wanda Landowska, Spanish painter Remedios Varo, future Nobel Prize in Medicine Otto Meyerhof, and authors Leon Feuchtwanger and Franz Werfel, amongst many others. In addition to this rescue work, the CAS also gave financial assistance to about 600 persons, and assisted the emigration through legal or illegal means of about 1,200 civilians —most of whom were threatened with extradition by the Gestapo— and about 300 Allied demobilised soldiers.[93]

Meanwhile in Washington, the Roosevelt administration also worked towards facilitating the evacuation of several thousand prominent refugees from territories vulnerable to Nazi expansionism, such as unoccupied France, Spain, Portugal, and Northern Africa. The organisation charged with this task was the President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees (PAC), a quasi-governmental committee established by President Roosevelt's initiative in the spring of 1938 to act as a liaison between US government agencies and private relief organisations. James McDonald, formerly the League of Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees Coming for Germany, became chairman of the

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[91] See for instance Colin B. Burke, *Information and Intrigue: From Index Cards to Dewey Decimal to Alger Hiss* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014), 277-89. Noel Field also worked for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). See Tony Sharp, *Stalin's American Spy: Noel Field, Allen Dulles, and the East European Show Trials* (London: Husrt & Company, 2014).

[92] Marcel Verzeanu, on the other hand, joined the USC team in Lisbon and later reached the rank of captain within the OSS. See Bea Hoopp, 'Biographical Notes on Dr. Marcel Verzeano' (16 October 1946); USC, bMS-16004/27(4).

[93] Bénédite, *La Filière Marseillaise*, 273-94.

PAC. On 24 June 1940, during a meeting between PAC secretary George L. Warren and State Department official Robert Pell, it was decided that this new agency would assume direct responsibility for eminent political refugees, scholars, artists, and other intellectuals —many of whom were Jewish.[94] Two days later, McDonald and Warren met with State and Justice Department officials to simplify the visa procedure for refugees within the mandate of this organisation. PAC would accept name lists from private relief organisations and carry out a preliminary assessment of the refugee's eligibility for migration to the US. After that, their names were sent to the Justice Department officials for clearance. If approved, the State Department would notify US consular officials in Europe with instructions to issue visas within the shortest possible delay.[95] Of the 2,975 names that PAC submitted to US consuls in Europe or the State Department itself by the end of 1942, 2,133 visa applicants made it to the United States or other havens in the Western Hemisphere.[96]

For the governments at war with Nazi Germany, however, the priority was to send thousands of demobilised British, Belgian, Czech, Dutch, and Polish soldiers through the Iberian Peninsula so that they could join the Allied armies via British Gibraltar. A number of these escape networks across the Pyrenees were organised independently by each national group. The Belgians established the 'Comet Line' (*Réseau Comète*), the Polish operated the 'Gallia-Kasanga' line, and the French had several escape routes of their own: 'Sainte-Jeanne', 'Brutus', 'Ajax', 'Franc-Tireur' and 'Maurice'. Cooperation across national groups, however, as well as with the French and Spanish Maquis, was common. The 'Pat Line', which was one of the most successful escape routes until it was disbanded in the spring of 1943, involved Belgian, Polish,

[94] See Robert Pell's memorandum (24 July 1940); NARA, RG-59, 2220. Reproduced in Richard Breitman, Barbara McDonald Steward, and Severin Hochberg (eds.), *Refugees and Rescue: The Diaries and Papers of James G. McDonald, 1935-1945* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press & USHMM, 2009), 206.

[95] McDonald and Warren to Undersecretary of State and Attorney General (31 July 1940); McDonald Papers, D367, P70. Reproduced in ibid.

[96] In parallel to scrutinising visa applications presented by relief organisations in Europe, PAC also searched for resettlement havens: PAC also explored the possibility of establishing Jewish settlements in Latin America (Brazil, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic), the British, French, and Dutch Guianas, Africa. The figure 'Fifty-Sixth Meeting of PACPR' (1 December 1942); McDonald Papers, D367, P66. Reproduced in Breitman et al., *Refugees and Rescue*, 336-7.

Norwegian, and even German-born secret agents.[97] The British MI9 had been supporting this rescue network since July 1940, when it deployed secret agent Donald Darling ('Sunday') to Lisbon with the aim of establishing underground routes to help escapers from Dunkirk. From the British Embassy in Madrid, Sir Michael Creswell ('Monday') was in charge of smuggling evaders into Gibraltar, from whence they could sail to the British Isles or, after November 1942, to Allied-controlled North Africa.[98] In addition to the land routes across the Pyrenees, many Allied prisoners of war (PoW) and a number of civilian refugees managed to reach Spain thanks to clandestine sailings organised by the OSS from the summer of 1940. One of the secret agents in charge of these sailings was no other than YMCA representative Donald Lowrie, who in his second-hat role as OSS agent had been assigned to effect the clandestine removal of Czech refugees from unoccupied France. To that end, Lowrie mobilise a 'phony little fleet' consisting of one submarine, one large trawler, and several large fishing boats.[99] In Marseille, Lowrie liaised with Vladimír Vochoč, Czech consular official in Marseille, who furnished undocumented refugees with Czech passports to facilitate their transit through the Peninsula.[100] At the Port of Barcelona, the OSS had three small vessels for the transportation of Allied personnel.[101] Naturally, there were many refugees who benefitted from these routes regardless of whether they wanted to contribute to the Allied war effort.

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[97] This route was named after the Belgian secret agent Albert Guérisse ('Pat O'Leary') following his capture by the Nazis in February 1943.
[98] The bibliography on this subject is extensive. See for instance Donald C. Caskie, *The Tartan Pimpernel* (London: Olbourne, 1957),64-70; Vincent Brome, *The Way Back: The Story of Lieut.-Commander Pat O'Leary* (London: Cassell, 1957); Airey Neave, *Saturday at MI9: A History of Underground Escape Lines in North-West Europe in 1940-5 by a Leading Organiser at MI9* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1969), 75-81; Gérard Bonet, *Les Pyrénées Orientales dans la Guerre: Les Années de Plomb, 1939-1944* (Écully: Horvath, 1992), 122-6; and Émilienne Eychenne, *Les Portes de la Liberté: Le Franchissement Clandestin de la Frontière Espagnole dans les Pyrénées-Orientales de 1939 à 1945* (Toulouse: Privat, 1985), 99-113; and Calvet, *Las Montañas de la Libertad*.
[99] Lowrie to Fry (4 December 1967); Fry Papers, Box 6, Folder 'L'.
[100] Although technically without value, as Czechoslovakia no longer existed, these documents were still recognised by Spanish and Portuguese officials throughout the summer of 1940. See Subak, *Rescue and Flight*, 42-46.
[101] In June 1943, these clandestine activities were discontinued by the US Ambassador, as Spanish authorities became more permissive about the transit of refugees from France. See Carlton J. H. Hayes, US Ambassador to Spain, to Hull (16 June 1943); University of Columbia, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Carlton J. Hayes Papers (henceforth Hayes Papers), Box 1, Folder 'May-June, 1943'.

Ships to Nowhere

Following the collapse of France in June 1940, the Port of Casablanca became laden with some two hundred vessels of all descriptions carrying nearly 4,000 refugees from Europe. Local authorities and relief organisations were stunned and unable to offer a solution. Since the port was saturated, many vessels were forced to lie at anchor outside the Casablanca harbour for weeks without water and food supply. By the time relief came —sometimes as late as mid-August— many passengers and seamen had to be interned in local infirmaries and temporary hospitalisation sheds by the dock. Although French refugees with sufficient funds were allowed to live in Casablanca, the majority of refugees were sent to internment camps in the region, or compelled to live in forced residence in towns across French Morocco.[102] When it was announced that German and Italian military commissioners would supervise the implementation of armistice provisions in French Morocco, panic seized the refugee community. Many who had already suffered internment in Germany and France also spread fear amongst the rest of refugees, who were desperate to flee to the Western Hemisphere. In words of Herbert S. Goold, US Consul-General in Casablanca, consular officials often witnessed 'failing, hysterical, weeping and frantic men and women grovelling on their knees' and frequent suicide threats by rejected visa applicants who had to be subdued to stop them from cutting their throat at the consular premises. Overwhelmed with work, the reduced staff of the US Consulate-General in Casablanca —comprising just four clerks and two officers— granted some two hundred US transit visas on average per day.[103]

But the main obstacle to migration was the near lack of transatlantic transportation. Following the signature of the armistice on 22 June 1940, American vessels no longer called at Casablanca or Dakar, and the air service between Casablanca and Lisbon was also discontinued. Many refugees

[102] Spanien, 'Report on Situation of Refugees still in Morocco' (9 October 1941); JDC, Reel 1, Folder 435.
[103] Herbert S. Goold, US Consul-General in Casablanca, 'Refugee Situation in Casablanca and Transit Visa Rush' (13 August 1940); NARA, RG-84, Box 36.

stranded in North Africa were forced to sail to the peninsular ports of Vigo, Seville, and Lisbon before they could continue their transatlantic journey. Despite an uncertain schedule involving long delays and frequent cancellations, there was also the occasional Portuguese and Spanish sailing that connected Tangier and Casablanca with the Portuguese capital.[104] But even this route was impaired by the attitude of the Spanish consul in Spanish-occupied Tangier, who would deliberately delay the granting of transit visas to refugees with passages booked with American Export Lines until they booked their tickets with a Spanish shipping company instead.[105]

Due to the scarcity of steamship capacity, refugees often roamed the Port of Casablanca looking to pay considerable amounts of money for an extra spot aboard one of the ships due to sail. Some ship masters took advantage of the situation and earned as much as $800 for the chance to sleep in one of the lifeboats, or on the deck of grimy coal or oil cargo ships. One of the most notorious was the Hungarian Imre Horváth, shipmaster and wireless operator of the Panamanian SS *Arena*, which remained docked at the Port of Casablanca for the most part of the summer of 1940. Horváth, who according to US Consul-General Goold 'surpassed his confrères in rapacity and unreliability', would discard a deal with a refugee if he thought he could make more money from another. When defrauded refugees claimed a reimbursement, the ship master would threaten to denounce them to the Gestapo, thus forcing destitute refugees to drop their charges. In some occasions, Horváth even demanded sexual favours from female refugees in addition to his exorbitant fees.[106]

The transportation situation improved moderately after December 1940, when Vichy authorised regular sailings between Marseille and the French colony of Martinique, via Oran, Algiers, and Casablanca. Once in the

[104] See 'Annual Economic Review: French Morocco' (30 January 1941); NARA, RG-84, Box 44.
[105] American Export Lines to Goold (14 January 1941); NARA, RG-84, Box 43. The Spanish Consulate in Tangiers was also accused of deliberately trying to delay the granting of visas to diminish the number of transients in the Spanish-occupied port of Tangier. See Philip H. Bagby, US vice-consul in Casablanca to H. Earle Russell (15 November 1941); NARA, RG-84, Box 47.
[106] Goold to Hull (4 September 1940); NARA, RG-84, Box 36.

Caribbean island, refugees could easily reach New York and Mexico.[107] Although more uncertain and complicated than direct sailings to the North American continent, the route through Martinique was cheaper and, most importantly, waived refugees from the need to obtain transit visas for Portugal and Spain, as well as French exit visas —given that Martinique was considered French territory. Furthermore, since Portugal had banned the transit of refugees born in Russia and the Baltic states, and Spain did not grant transit visas to men of military age, this route represented their only chance to migrate from non-occupied France to the Americas. Sailings took place regularly aboard several French vessels such as the SS *Capitaine Paul-Lemerle*, SS *Winnipeg,* SS *Wyoming,* and SS *Mont Viso*, and although priority was given to colonial officials and demobilised men, several thousand refugees stranded in non-occupied France and French North Africa managed to reach the Americas in this way.[108]

Unfortunately, the route via Martinique came to an abrupt end on 26 May 1941. On that day, a Dutch torpedo boat serving with the British Ministry of War Transport (MoWT) seized the SS *Winnipeg* and its cargo of 300 German Jewish refugees shortly before its arrival to Martinique.[109] Naturally, the Vichy government was outraged by the capture and appropriation of the French vessel by the British, and ordered the immediate termination of the Martinique sailings. This had terrible ramifications for the nearly 700 refugees who had set sail earlier in May aboard the SS *Mont Viso* and the SS *Wyoming* bound for the Western Hemisphere. These were mostly Jewish refugees cared for by JDC and the HICEM, and a smaller number of political refugees jointly dependent on Fry's CAS and the USC. With the exception of French nationals, who needed

[107] Stanton to White (5 December 1940); NARA, RG-84, Box 37.

[108] Dorothy Bonnell, 'Current Information: Bulletin No. 1' (16 April 1941); USHMM, RG-67.007M, Series IX, Box 70, Folder 46.

[109] The SS *Winnipeg* was escorted to Port of Spain, in Trinidad and Tobago, where its 300 passengers underwent a thorough examination. Among them were historian Wilhelm Herzog, and photographers Joseph Breitenbach and Fred Stein. On 6 June, about 200 of them were allowed to continue their journey to New York on the SS *Évangeline*, while the rest were retained in Trinidad until their immigration documents could be arranged. See Dorothy Bonnell, 'Current Information Bulletin Nr. 3' (16 June 1941); USHMM, RG-67.007M, Series IX, Box 69, Folder 16. See also Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 201-6; and Alisa Siegel, *An Unintended Haven: the Jews of Trinidad, 1937 to 2003* (University of Toronto: PhD Thesis, 2003), 206.

no special permits to set foot in French Morocco, the majority were forced to remain aboard their ships for several weeks as these laid anchor at the Port of Casablanca. Lisa Oppenheimer, who had embarked the SS *Mont Viso* in Algiers on 12 May, noted the terrible food and hygienic conditions aboard the vessel: 'Gurs was a sanatorium compared with it!'.[110] By mid-June, French authorities resolved to intern them until they could arrange their emigration. Passengers older than seventy and with children below the age of fifteen —at least 155 persons— were interned at Sidi-el-Ayachi.[111] The rest of refugees —no less than 240 persons— were transferred to an internment camp administered by the French Foreign Legion at Oued Zem, situated 160 km inland from Casablanca. Oued Zem consisted of several wooden huts covered with corrugate iron roofs and surrounded with barbed wire, four open-air latrines, and a few water taps that ran an uncertain number of hours per day. Adding to their dreadful condition, refugees at Oued Zem also endured extremely high summer temperatures and military discipline, and had no access to medicines or soap.[112] Following French orders, refugees at Sidi-el-Ayachi and Oued Zem would only be liberated once in possession of new transatlantic passages, valid destination and transit visas, and a '*certificate d'hebergement*' to guarantee that they had resources to find lodging in the Casablanca area and would not become a public charge. Despite numerous complaints to the *Compagnie Générale Transatlantique* and the *Société Générale de Transport Maritimes*, the 3,500 francs they paid for their passages to Martinique was never reimbursed.[113]

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[110] Lisa Oppenheimer, letter from the SS *Mont Viso* (12-29 May 1941); USC, bMS-16007/3(28). See also Dexter, Lisbon, to J. Harry Hooper, Associate Director at USC Boston (10 June 1941); Brown University Library, Robert C. Dexter and Elisabeth A. Dexter Papers (henceforth Dexter Papers), Box 1, Folder 11.

[111] See for instance the case file for Ellen Weissmann, a Jewish refugee from Mannheim aged seventeen who had managed to get US visas ahead of her parents —who were still at Gurs— and sail on the SS *Mont Viso*. Weissmann was interned at Sidi-El-Ayachi, where she remained stranded after the expiration of her US visa. The file is silent regarding her ultimate fate. By contrast, Nora Hackel, who was interned in Sidi-el-Ayachi with her elderly mother and her three-year-old daughter Nicole —all passengers of the SS *Wyoming*— managed to migrate to the US in August 1941 aboard the SS *Nyassa*. In USHMM, AFSC Case Files No. 8636, Ellen Weissmann, and No. 7645, Nora Hackel, respectively.

[112] Pierre A. Stern, letter from Oued Zem (15 June 1941); USC, bMS-16007/3(28). See also the case file for Rudolf Selke and his wife, both interned in Oued Zem for weeks until their migration to Mexico could be arranged in August 1941. In USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 7038, Rudolf Selke.

[113] See the report by Dr. Herbert Lennhoff (28 June 1941); USC, bMS-16007/3(28); and

The appropriation of the SS *Winnipeg*, however, was actually the second French ship carrying refugees that was captured by the British, and therefore just the second half to the story. The first incident had taken place on 18 January 1941, when the British auxiliary cruiser HMS *Asturias* captured the French SS *Mendoza* 60 miles east of the Uruguayan capital of Montevideo, and placed it at the service of the British MoWT.[114] In this occasion, the collateral victims were the 567 refugees aboard the SS *Alsina*, a French ship belonging to the *Société Générale de Transport Maritimes* which had left Marseille bound for Rio de Janeiro on 15 January, two months behind schedule. On 23 January, French authorities aborted the voyage of the *Alsina* and ordered it to put in at Dakar until the British granted the ship a Navicert to guarantee its safe sailing across the Atlantic. The British eluded any responsibility for the detention of this group of refugees at Dakar, and remained adamant in their decision not to grant Navicerts to any French vessels sailing to the Western Hemisphere.[115] Washington, on the other hand, stayed neutral in this dispute for fear of jeopardising US relations with the Pétain Government, and despite the views of Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long, who fiercely advocated the seizure of foreign-flag ships by the US government to make up for the heavy material loses of the British Royal Navy.[116]

Elizabeth A. Dexter, *Last Port to Freedom* (Unpublished draft, [ca. 1943]), 107-15. In Dexter Papers, Box 2, File 4.

[114] Bernard Wasserstein's interpretation of the *Alsina* affair fails to acknowledge the crucial role of the British government in regards to two key points: the seizure and appropriation of the SS *Mendoza* and the SS *Winnipeg* by the MoWT; and the British refusal to grant Navicerts to future French sailings carrying refugees across the Atlantic. Without these crucial points, Wasserstein's portrayal of Vichy's decision to retain the SS *Alsina* at the Port of Dakar for five months seems somewhat capricious and illogical. Another issue stemming from this interpretation is his understanding that the British government was 'impelled' to act the way it did because the *Alsina* was loaded with refugees sailing 'with no legal destination'. This is not true either. It was only in October 1941, during their second attempt to reach South America, that the *Alsina* passengers —now sailing aboard SS *Cabo de Buena Esperanza* and SS *Cabo de Hornos*— were refused admittance into Brazil and Argentina. Would the British government have allowed the SS *Winnipeg* and the SS *Alsina* to continue their journey to the Americas in the first place, their passengers would have been spared an enormous amount of suffering; and the Vichy government would have had no reason to discontinue refugee sailings across the Atlantic, thus allowing for the exit of more Jewish refugees from unoccupied France. See Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews*, 141-2.

[115] A. K. Helm, British Embassy in Washington, to H. F. Reissing, Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign, Executive Secretary (24 April 1941); NARA, RG-59, Box 5245.

[116] See Long's diary entry of 12 March 1941, in Fred L. Israel, *The War Diary of Breckinridge Long: Selections from the Years, 1939-1944* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 186-7.

In parallel to these fruitless negotiations between Vichy and London, the refugees aboard the SS *Alsina* were sequestered aboard this 'sailing prison' for more than five months, as the ship laid at anchor off the Port of Dakar. The *Alsina* reached the capital of French West Africa on 27 January carrying 567 refugees from Europe: mainly German, Belgian, Polish, and Czech Jewish refugees, as well as 195 Spanish republican refugees.[117] As told by Ilza Czapska, a Jewish refugee from Silesia who travelled with her three children, passengers were told that since their tickets only covered food and accommodation for the three-week voyage to Brazil they would have to pay the additional room and board fees. This created great agitation amongst the money-deprived refugees onboard, who desperately tried to find alternative and implausible ways to avoid ship confinement, such as reaching the nearest English colony on sailboats, or obtaining visas for Liberia. With the exception of French nationals, who were allowed to roam freely and buy goods in the city, passengers were only allowed ashore once a week, and even then could not go beyond the harbour to buy any foodstuffs. As time went on, passengers aboard the *Alsina* began to find ways to pass the time, and organised vocational workshops, language study groups, an 'international' chess tournament, and a show staged by Polish cinema director Zbigniew Ziembiński. Ilza's five-year-old son, Janek, became so accustomed to life aboard the *Alsina*, that thereafter he would say 'going ashore' when going to town, and would refer to the top stories of a building as 'the upper deck'.[118]

The British appropriation of the SS *Winnipeg* on 26 May further convinced French authorities that the British were not willing to tolerate the traffic of French refugee ships across the Atlantic. Thus, for as long as the

[117] For the point of view of Spanish refugees fleeing Franco's Spain, see Niceto Alcalá-Zamora, *441 Días... Un Viaje Azaroso desde Francia a la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Sopena Argentina, 1942); Arantzazu Amezaga de Irujo, *Crónicas de El Alsina: Pasajeros de la Libertad* (Bilbao: Idatz Ekintza, 1982); and Néstor Basterretxea Arzadun, *Crónica errante y una miscelánea* (Irún: Alberdania, 2006).

[118] Ilza Czapska, 'Our Journey from Obra to Brazil, 1939-1941', in Katherine Morris (ed.), *Odyssey of Exile: Jewish Women Flee the Nazis for Brazil* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996), 62-67. For more details regarding conditions aboard the SS *Alsina*, see the letters sent by refugees Julius Justitz, Otokar Justic, and Josef Robitschek from the Port of Dakar to HICEM Marseille (23 February, 28 February, and 5 March 1941 respectively); YIVO, RG-245.5, MKM-17.13, France II-206.

British refused to grant Navicerts to French sailings, no French vessel would carry refugees to the Western Hemisphere. Instead, Vichy declared that it was the responsibility of the governments of the countries to which the refugees were heading —i.e. Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, and the US— to charter a neutral ship that would take the passengers of the SS *Alsina,* the SS *Mont Viso*, and the SS *Wyoming* to their final destination.[119]

On 3 June, the *Alsina* was allowed to proceed to Casablanca after five long months waiting at the Port of Dakar. Upon arrival, the passengers of the *Alsina* faced a similar fate to the refugees aboard the SS *Mont Viso*, and the SS *Wyoming.* Refugees older than seventy and with children below fifteen were sent to the camp at Sidi-El-Ayachi, whereas the rest were taken to the camp in Kasbah Tadla, 50 km far from Oued Zem, at the base of the Atlas Mountains. Over the summer, the HICEM representative in Casablanca, Raphael Spanien, visited these camps to regularise the refugees' visa situation, while the JDC arranged transportation to call at Casablanca. At the beginning of August 1941, two groups of 190 and 158 refugees formerly aboard the SS *Mont Viso* and SS *Wyoming* who were in possession of US visas sailed to New York aboard the SS *Guinée* and the SS *Nyassa*, of the Portuguese *Companhia Colonial de Navegação*. These sailings were relatively uneventful, and caused great joy amongst the North African refugee community, as these were the first direct sailings between Casablanca and New York in months.[120]

But for the refugees with visas for South American countries the odyssey was not yet finished. Excluding Spanish refugees, who sailed at a later date, the majority of Jewish refugees formerly aboard the SS *Alsina* left Casablanca on two Spanish ships owned by the Sevilla-based shipping company *Ybarra Line*: the SS *Cabo de Buena Esperanza*, and the SS *Cabo de Hornos*. The first group of about 40 Jewish refugees set sail early in October 1941 aboard the SS *Cabo de*

[119] Gaston Henry-Haye, French Ambassador in Washington DC, to Cordell Hull, US Secretary of State (5 June 1941); NARA, RG-59, Box 5244. For a general survey on the *Alsina* diplomatic negotiations see Herman F. Reissig, Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign (SRRC) Executive Secretary, 'Memorandum on French steamer SS *Alsina*' (15 May 1941); USHMM, 1997.A.0050.

[120] Spanien, HICEM Casablanca, to HICEM Lisbon (10 August 1941); YIVO, RG-245.5, MKM-17.9, France II-143. See also '200 Refugees Rescued from Africa by J.D.C. Reach New York', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (7 August 1941).

Buena Esperanza, furnished with Brazilian visas that had been reissued by the Brazilian Consul in Casablanca upon orders from the Brazilian Ambassador in Vichy.[121] Unfortunately, these visas were not honoured by immigration officials upon arrival at Rio de Janeiro on 16 October, and refugees were not allowed to disembark. The ship continued to Buenos Aires, where the passengers of the *Cabo de Buena Esperanza* were exceptionally allowed to stay for three months in the *Hotel de Inmigrantes* —Buenos Aires' Ellis Island equivalent— while they found visas for another country. But a week later, the second group of 50 Jewish refugees reached Buenos Aires aboard the SS *Cabo de Hornos*, and Argentina's Acting President Ramón Castillo changed his previous ruling and ordered the deportation of both groups of refugees, who were to sail back to Europe on the same ship. The captain of the SS *Cabo de Hornos*, Jose Lanz Mayro, declared he was unsure whether the Jewish refugees aboard his ship would ever reach Spain: 'since the majority prefer suicide to the somber future awaiting them'.[122] The Paraguayan government offered to grant visas to all 85 of them, but Argentinian authorities refused to grant them transit visas for fear that the refugees would cross back into Argentina illegally shortly after arriving to Paraguay. The opposition of the Argentinian government went so far as to have the police prevent the Paraguayan Consul from boarding the *Cabo de Hornos* to stamp the visas on the refugees' passports. The AFSC tried to find asylum for them in the British colony of Trinidad, but without success.[123] At the very last instant, on 18 November 1941, the Dutch Government-in-Exile agreed to let the 85 Jewish refugees stay in the Dutch island of Curaçao for three months on condition that the JDC would cover all costs and arrange their migration to a

[121] The Brazilian ambassador to Vichy at that time was Luis Martins de Souza Dantas, who granted hundreds of Brazilian visas to Jewish refugees attempting to escape unoccupied France while disobeying orders from the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was posthumously made Righteous Among the Nations in June 2002. See Lesser, *Welcoming the Undesirables,* 139-142.

[122] Cited in 'Jewish Refugees Denied Admittance into Argentina Threaten Suicide', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (31 October 1941). See the more extensive article 'High Seas: Whited Sepulcher', *Time* (1 December 1941).

[123] The Governor of Trinidad, Sir John Huggins, had practically barred the entry of refugees from Nazi-occupied countries since the beginning of the war, owing to his fear for enemy agents and the island's acute housing crisis. See Alisa Siegel, *An Unintended Haven: the Jews of Trinidad, 1937 to 2003* (University of Toronto: Unpublished PhD Thesis, 2003).

third country.[124]

The last group of *Alsina* refugees to leave North Africa —mostly Spanish republican refugees and 17 German Jews— sailed from Casablanca on 29 October aboard the SS *Quanza*, bound for Veracruz (Mexico) and Habana (Cuba), after nine degrading months of ordeal.[125] Among them was Niceto Alcalá-Zamora, formerly President of the Spanish Republic, now sailing into exile in third class: 'we felt like living debris of a sunken world; like loose threads of a ragged social fabric; like shipwrecked survivors of the Old continent floating adrift towards the New'.[126]

[124] See the detailed report by Moses W. Beckelman (23 December 1941); JDC, Reel 80, Folder 370.

[125] Consuelo Soldevilla Oria, *La Cantabria del Exilio: una Emigración Olvidada, 1936-1975* (Santander: Universidad de Cantabria, 1998), 129.

[126] Alcalá-Zamora, *441 Días…*, 32. My translation.

Chapter Three:

The Iberian Peninsula: Europe's Bottleneck, 1940-42

With the outbreak of war in September 1939, an increasing number of refugees sought to reach Portugal in a frantic attempt to leave Europe for the Americas or British Palestine. This caused much concern within the Portuguese secret police, which had emerged as the main —if not the only— arbiter of Portuguese immigration policy. The head of the PVDE, Captain Agostinho Lourenço, urged Salazar to act in his capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs and tighten Portugal's visa policy even further.[1] Salazar agreed to his proposal. On 11 November 1939, the MNE forbid Portuguese consuls abroad from issuing transit visas to a long list of persons without previous authorisation from the MNE: stateless persons; Nansen-passport holders; Russians (i.e. Soviet citizens); persons who 'do not explain their motives for going to Portugal to the consul's satisfaction'; persons whose passports contain 'marking of some kind' (i.e. J-stamped passports); persons unable to return freely to their country of origin; persons not in possession of visas for a country overseas; persons not in possession of plane or boat tickets to a third country; persons without sufficient means of support; and Jews who had been expelled from their countries of origin or citizenship.[2]

Hence, this decree significantly restricted the entry into Portugal of two main refugee demographics. The first concerns refugees from the Soviet Union, whose entry into Portugal was practically impossible due to the regime's fears of communist infiltrations. Following the Soviet invasion of the Baltic states in June 1940, this same anti-communist paranoia led the Salazarist regime to cut relations with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and stop recognising the passports of their citizens.[3] The second refugee group most affected by this new decree were the Jews from the Reich, and especially thousands of Polish Jewish refugees whose citizenship had been rescinded by the Polish government for

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[1] See letter from Captain Agostinho Lourenço, head of the PVDE (24 October 1939); *Arquivo Histórico Diplomático do Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros* (henceforth AMNE), 2P-A43-M38B. Cited in Pimentel and Ninhos, 'Portugal, Jewish Refugees, and the Holocaust', 105.

[2] Circular No. 14 of the MNE (11 November 1939). Reproduced in Milgram, *Portugal, Salazar, and the Jews*, 69.

[3] Pimentel, *Judeus em Portugal*, 195.

having 'lost the connection with the Polish State'.[4] Whilst it is true that Salazar's new visa policy was introduced at the instigation of the PVDE, it is no longer possible to excuse Portugal's visa restrictions as mainly driven by foreign and domestic policy considerations: they were clearly tainted with antisemitic prejudice.[5]

Unlike Portugal, Franco's Spain was a country devastated by civil war and aligned with Nazi Germany, which did not represent an attractive travel option for refugees fleeing Nazism. For good measure, Franco's decree of 11 May 1939 had banned entry to Jews unless they had actively supported the Nationalist cause during the Spanish Civil War. This, of course, was difficult to prove, and in any case was not available to most Jewish refugees from Europe. On 1 May 1940, the Franco government issued a second decree that centralised all transit and migration decisions under the Spanish police. Prior to the issuance of transit visas to foreigners, Spanish consuls would have to obtain authorisation from the *Dirección General de Seguridad* (DGS) in Madrid —as was the case in Portugal. If transients were in possession of Portuguese transit visas, however, Spanish consuls were still allowed to issue transit visas for Spain without prior authorisation from the DGS.[6]

This exception is problematic, as it seems to contradict the previous decree barring Jews from entering Spain. Whilst the decree of May 1940 builds upon the one of May 1939, it also seems to imply that Jews with Portuguese transit visas would be allowed to transit through Spain, thus contravening the older decree. It appears, however, that this was not a fortuitous loophole in Spanish law, but a deliberate way to render Spanish immigration policy ambiguous enough to allow for a lax interpretation of the law by the Spanish executive as it saw fitting. In fact, if there is one single feature that defines Spanish policy regarding the transit of Jews during this period is that of inconsistency.

The onset of Hitler's Western European campaign in May 1940 led to a

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[4] See the Polish law of 31 March 1938. Cited in Weis, 'Statelessness as a Legal-Political Problem', 7-8.

[5] Milgram, *Portugal, Salazar, and the Jews*, 70.

[6] See Circular No. 90 (11 May 1939), and Circular No. 152 (1 May 1940) of the MAE. Both decrees can be found in AGA, AMAE, Recopilación de Decretos, without catalogue number. Both orders are discussed at length in Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto,* 131-3,

new wave of refugees seeking to leave Europe through the Iberian Peninsula. After the fall of France, transatlantic points of departure in Western Europe narrowed to Lisbon, the ports of Spain, and Marseille, and even then sailings from these ports were rare during the summer. On 27 June, the Wehrmacht reached the Franco-Spanish border on the Atlantic end of the Pyrenees, which separated Hendaye, in occupied France, from the Spanish town of Irún. With the closing of the Hendaye-Irún frontier, the influx of refugees shifted to the Mediterranean end of the Franco-Spanish border, which separated Cerbère, in Vichy France, from Portbou, in Spain. The Franco government reacted by reinforcing frontier surveillance to deter clandestine crossings across the Pyrenees —not just from refugees, but also from Allied spies and other unwelcome visitors.[7] In view of the restrictive immigration polices of Spain and Portugal, how is it possible that several thousand Jews reached Portugal in the summer of 1940?[8]

The majority of Jewish refugees who succeeded in crossing the Pyrenees border in the aftermath of the German occupation of France managed to do so thanks to transit visas issued by Aristides de Sousa Mendes, the Portuguese Consul-General in Bordeaux.[9] Sousa Mendes had been transferred from the Consulate-General in Antwerp to the one in Bordeaux in 1938. The consul issued his first transit visas to Jews and stateless persons towards the end of 1939, disobeying Salazar's decree of 11 November 1939 which stipulated that visa applications had to be approved by the MNE in Lisbon. Although he was reprimanded on several occasions, Sousa Mendes continued to defy his superiors. Thus, between January and June 1940, Sousa Mendes issued 2,862 visas to refugees irrespective of their nationality or political status, without consent from the MNE. Of that figure, no less than 1,575 were granted between

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[7] Marquina and Ospina, *España y los Judíos*, 146.

[8] According to Augusto D'Esaguy, president of the Portuguese Committee of Assistance to Jewish Refugees (COMASSIS), 18,000 refugees reached Portugal in a single week at the end of June 1940. Mühlen estimates the number of refugees reaching Portugal during the whole month of June in 18,000-25,000; while Tartakower and Grossmann offer the more 'conservative' figure of 15,000 refugees for the same month. An analysis of HICEM's records, however, proves these figures to be blown out of proportion. See respectively, Augusto d'Esaguy, *Two Addresses* (Lisboa: Editorial Império, 1950), 16; Mühlen, *Fluchtweg Spanien-Portugal*, 151; and Tartakower and Grossmann, *The Jewish Refugee*, 312-3.

[9] Milgram, 'Portugal, the Consuls and the Jewish Refugees', 367-8.

11 and 22 June. To that figure we should add an unkownn number of visas issued by Sousa Mendes during his short stays at the Portuguese consular missions in Bayonne and Hendaye, after the diplomat had been dismissed from his post in Bordeaux for breach of discipline. Alerted by the stream of refugees holding Portuguese consular visas, the Spanish military commander at the Irún border post warned the Portuguese Embassy in Madrid that unless they stopped that imprudent behaviour, Spain would feel obliged to stop recognising Portuguese visas altogether. The Portuguese ambassador in Madrid, Pedro Teótonio Pereira, reassured the Spanish government that all visas issued by the Sousa Mendes in Bordeaux had been rescinded.[10]

Despite the Portuguese ambassador's assurances, refugees continued to arrive to Spain in great numbers. On 24 June, Spanish authorities decided to close the border leaving several thousand Jewish refugees in possession of Portuguese visas stranded in French territory. The Portuguese, in turn, reacted by closing their own border with Spain. The head of the PVDE, Captain Agostinho Lourenço, travelled to the Spanish-Portuguese border post in Vilar Formoso to try and return those refugees who had already made their way into Spain thanks to Sousa Mendes' irregular practices, but Spanish authorities refused to consent to this insisting that Portuguese visas should be observed. In view of Spanish objections, the Portuguese had no choice but to allow refugees with visas for a country overseas to continue their way to Lisbon. After much insistence from the Lisbon Jewish Community, refugees not in possession of destination visas were confined to forced residence in several Portuguese towns.[11] Although refugees in forced residence had every one of their steps surveilled by the PVDE, refugees in these designated areas fared far better than those of internment in southern France. Crucially, by agreeing to place Jewish refugees under direct police surveillance, both the Salazarist regime and the PVDE felt more in control of the refugee situation in Portugal, and less anxious

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[10] Pedro Teotónio Pereira, *Memórias: Postos em que Servi e algumas Recordações Pessoais* (Vol. 2. Lisboa: Verbo, 1973), 219-20.
[11] The PVDE organised three groups of refugees according to nationality: British and French, Dutch and Belgian, and Czech and Polish. Each of these groups was allocated to a different forced residence, including Porto, Curia, Caldas da Rainha, Figueira da Foz, and Coimbra. Pimentel, *Judeus em Portugal*, 107-32.

about the potential risks of having their capital overcrowded with foreigners.

After enduring a disciplinary process, Sousa Mendes was dismissed from the diplomatic corps and ostracised by the Salazarist regime. Ironically, the Portuguese government did capitalise on the diplomat's humanitarian achievements while Salazar was still in power. In 1966, Aristides de Sousa Mendes was the first diplomat to be recognised as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem, initiating a long path towards the rehabilitation of his memory that only cultivated after Portugal's transition to democracy.[12]

Whilst he was the most prolific in terms of the number of visas issued to Jews, Sousa Mendes was not the only Portuguese consul who disobeyed orders from Lisbon to help Jews in distress. As early as April 1934, the MNE had already confronted the Portuguese honorary consul in Athens, B. Lencastre e Meneses, for issuing over two hundred Portuguese passports to Jews in exchange for considerable amounts of money. The honorary consul did so using a legal disposition from 1913, by which the First Portuguese Republic (1910-26) had offered Portuguese nationality to Sephardic Jews in diaspora if they could prove their Portuguese roots. On 7 May 1934, the MNE dismissed Lencastre e Meneses and revoked the capacity of its honorary consuls to issue Portuguese passports altogether.[13]

A similar case is that of the Portuguese Ambassador in Berlin, Alberto da Veiga Simões. In the aftermath of *Kristallnacht*, Veiga Simões was reprimanded for granting visas to Jews against orders from the Portuguese police. During the spring of 1939, moreover, Veiga Simões endorsed the irregular practices of the Portuguese Consul-General in Hamburg, who negotiated the resettlement of German Jews with the civilian governors of Azores and Madeira without the approval from the PVDE and the MNE. With the arrival of the German army to the Pyrenees in June 1940, Veiga Simões' infractions became intolerable from a diplomatic point of view, and Lisbon replaced its ambassador to Berlin

[12] See for instance Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros, *Vidas Poupadas: A Acção de três Diplomatas Portugueses na II Guerra Mundial* (Exhibition catalogue. Lisbon: Instituto Diplomático, 2000), also available in English.
[13] Schaefer, *Portugal e os Refugiados Judeus*, 48-50.

with the pro-Nazi Count of Tovar.[14] Unlike these diplomats, who were sanctioned by the Salazarist government, there were others who challenged the regime's policies towards Jews without contravening the law. On 31 December 1940, José Augusto de Magalhães chose to resign from his duties as Portuguese consul in Marseille to protest against a newly introduced measure by which consuls were no longer authorised to issue Portuguese transit visas without prior authorisation from the PVDE.[15]

It is largely due to the strong interdependence between the various travel documents and visas needed to escape Vichy France through the Iberian Peninsula and Portugal that this was such an exhausting process for refugees. In order to achieve this, refugees had to obtain a a visa for a country overseas, a French exit visa, and transit visas for Spain and Portugal. Portuguese transit visas, moreover, were only granted to refugees in possession of destination visas to an overseas country, as well as a solid booking with air or maritime transportation. Adding to this bureaucratic labyrinth, the issuance of Spanish transit visas was also contingent on the possession of visas for Portugal, thus creating innumerable complications for the poor refugees. And this is assuming that these persons found themselves in unoccupied France. For those who were still in Nazi-occupied territory, the list of travel documents needed to migrate also included a certificate from the local police formally cancelling their registration as residents; one from the Ministry of Finance attesting payment of all emigration fines and taxes; an itemised customs declaration, and, in the case of Austrian Jews, an exit visa issued by German authorities.

An additional complication was the fact that the validity period for most destination visas —usually four months— was often not enough time to arrange all other travel documents and reach the port of embarkation on time.[16] If the

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[14] Milgram, 'Portugal, the Consuls and the Jewish Refugees', 361-5.

[15] Previously, Portuguese consuls could grant transit visas to persons in possession of booked passages to a third country (either by plane or by ship). On 16 December 1940, however, that exception was removed, which meant that the issuance of all transit visas was conditional upon previous consultation to the PVDE. See 'Instruções Gerais' (13 June 1940); AMNE, RC-779.

[16] To assist the outflow of Jewish refugees from Western Europe, the British FO extended all Palestine immigration certificates issued after 1 April 1940 until 31 December. British Passport Control Office (BPCO) in Madrid, to British Consulate-General in Barcelona (5 September 1940); TNA, FO-637/73/1517.

destination visa expired before the refugee managed to set sail, the ship booking was automatically void, and the whole process had to begin anew. Erich Maria Remarque called it 'the lunacy of bureaucracy gone wild':

> 'No residence permit, but no exit permit either. They won't let you stay and they won't let you leave. Finally you get your exit permit, but your Spanish transit visa has meanwhile expired. You can't get another unless you have a Portuguese visa, and that's contingent on something else again. Which means that you have to start all over again —your days are spent waiting outside the consulates, those vestibules of heaven and hell! A vicious circle of madness!'.[17]

At the beginning of October 1940, the Franco regime decided to tighten its visa policy even further, possibly in preparation for the visit to Spain of *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler, who was due to arrive on 23 October 1940. Pressured by the DGS, which considered Spain's border policy to be too permissive, the MAE issue a new decree on 8 October 1940 with the clear aim of increasing red-tape impediments to the issuance of transit visas. By virtue of these new measures, transit visa applicants had to send to Madrid the following list of documents: two financial affidavits signed by two Spanish citizens; details of their destination visas and all the transit visas necessary to reach the country of destination; and the name of the ship, the port, and the date when they intended to sail. As stated in the order, the government would issue a response 'within three to six weeks', and that is assuming that the application was made by telegraph rather than by regular mail, which would have led to even greater delays.[18] The HICEM office in Lisbon noticed how this new decree could extend the waiting time for a Spanish transit visa for even months.[19] Varian Fry also noticed a radical change in Spanish transit visa policy after October 1940: Spanish authorities would no longer recognise the American 'affidavits in lieu of passport', which the most common travel documents for

[17] Erich Maria Remarque, *The Night in Lisbon* (London: Hutchinson & Co, 1964), 219.
[18] Note from the Spanish Consulate in Marseille (8 October 1940); YIVO, RG-245.5, MKM-17.2, France II-26.
[19] HICEM Lisbon, Note 'Obtention des Visas de Transit Espagnols' (undated); YIVO, MKM-20.17, File 149.

political refugees, and would refuse transit visas to Germans, Austrians, and Poles.[20] James McDonald interpreted this decree as a way to effectively refuse transit visas to Jewish refugees in France without the need to implement any law to that end.[21] Additionally, the same decree of 8 October also barred entry into Spain to men of military age —18 to 40— if they were nationals of a country at war with Nazi Germany, including French nationals, and holders of Palestinian certificates. This was clearly a concession to the Axis powers, as it prevented these young men from joining the Allied war effort against Germany. Cooperation on this respect, however, was not restricted to Franco's Spain. From late 1940, Portugal also began to refuse entry to men in that same category.[22] It is not clear whether these measures were the result of Madrid's and Lisbon's attempts to appease Nazi Germany, at a time when the Germans were still planning an invasion of the Iberian Peninsula to drive the British out of the Western Mediterranean.[23] What is clear is that these measures compromised both Spain's and Portugal's duties as neutrals as stipulated in the 1907 Hague Convention.

In addition to those who crossed the Franco-Spanish border on foot, there was a number of Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany who reached Lisbon in sealed trains. It was after the German invasion of Luxembourg on 10 May 1940 that the first sealed trains began to arrive to the Portuguese border. Without requesting Portugal's approval, German occupation authorities decided to expel the approximately 2,500 Jews who lived in the Grand Duchy —of whom 500 were foreigners— by sending them directly to the Spanish-Portuguese border. These so-called *Zwangstransporte* ('forced transports'), which carried between 150 and 300 persons each, were escorted by the Gestapo and only opened upon arrival to the Spanish-Portuguese border. Naturally, when these train convoys began to arrive at the Portuguese border post at Vilar Formoso,

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[20] *The New Leader* (25 April 1942). Cited in Tartakower and Grossman, 156-7.
[21] McDonald to Sulzberger (10 October 1940); New York Times Company Archive, Sulzberger Autograph File. Cited in Breitman, et al., *Refugees and Rescue*, 220.
[22] See letters from the Germany Embassy in Lisbon to the MNE (9 November 1940 and 30 June 1941); AMNE, 2P-A43-M83. Cited in Pimentel, *Judeus em Portugal*, 200-1.
[23] Norman J. W. Goda, 'The Riddle of the Rock: A Reassessment of German Motives for the Capture of Gibraltar in the Second World War', *Journal of Contemporary History* 28:2 (April 1933): 297-314.

Portuguese authorities refused them admission claiming that Portugal was a sovereign country that would not follow orders dictated by foreign authorities. The fact that most of these refugees were in possession of fraudulent Cuban visas, did not help either.

Owing to pressure from Lisbon's Jewish community and the president of the Luxembourg Jewish community, Albert Nussbaum, some two hundred Luxembourgish Jews were allowed to continue to Lisbon and to arrange their emigration to the Americas. But the majority of convoys did not encounter the same fortune and were sent back to Bayonne in occupied France, where most of them faced internment unless they were able to organise their prompt migration overseas. Around fifty of them managed to obtain visas for Dominican Republic, others managed to survive in clandestinity, while the least fortunate were murdered at the Nazi death camps after years of internment.[24] These forced transports should not be mistaken for the sealed transports in which Jews from Greater Germany could 'voluntarily' migrate if they were in possession of visas to a country overseas. Starting in January 1941, this Berlin-Lisbon line transported Jewish refugees from Germany, Austria, and the Bohemia-Moravia Protectorate on a regular basis. Since train coaches were only opened upon arrival to the Portuguese capital this method of transportation waived the need for French and Spanish travel documents, and thus simplified the evacuation process.[25] Unfortunately, sealed trains connecting Berlin with Lisbon were discontinued in October 1941, when Nazi authorities forbade the exit of Jews from the Reich and from Nazi-occupied areas in preparation for the 'Final Solution'.

It is no easy task to estimate the number of Jewish refugees who transited through the Iberian Peninsula between 1940 and 1942. The figures we have are asymmetric in various ways, and are exclusive of clandestine migration. The PVDE, who was in charge of policing Portuguese borders, stated that 43,540 foreigners entered Portugal during the year 1940 alone.[26] The AFSC

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[24] See Pimentel and Magalhães Ramalho, *O Comboio do Luxemburgo*.

[25] Max Gottschalk, 'The Refugee Problem', *American Jewish Year Book* 43 (1941-2), 328-9.

[26] Considering that only 36,579 were reported to have left the country during the same year, the year 1940 left a positive difference of 6,961 foreigners in Portugal. See PVDE, 'Movimento

representative in Lisbon, Philip B. Conard, estimated that a total of 85,000 refugees passed through the Iberian Peninsula for the period 1940 to 1942.[27] But how many of these refugees were Jews? According to JDC, 12,718 Jews sailed from the Iberian Peninsula during this period thanks to the joint efforts of HICEM and JDC, costing these two organisations $4,951,524. From that figure, 8,150 persons left in 1941 (on 105 different sailings) and 4,568 persons in 1942 (on 18 sailings).[28] However, this figure does not include the number of Jewish persons who sailed during 1940; those who migrated on their own or thanks to the efforts of other relief organisations; those who were not able to leave the Peninsula by 1942; and those —males of military age— who left Spain in convoys organised by the British Embassy via Gibraltar. There are, of course, much higher estimates, but these two are the most authoritative. Haim Avni estimates the total number of Jews who reached Spain and Portugal during the first half of the war at 30,000.[29] Bauer gives the higher figure of 40,000.[30] My estimate is that between 15,000 and 20,000 persons left Europe through the Iberian Peninsula fleeing Nazi anti-semitic persecution between the outbreak of war through the end of 1942.

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pelas Fronteiras' [31 December 1940]; *Arquivo Naçional da Torre do Tombo* (ANTT), *Archivo Oliveira Salazar* (AOS), CO-IN-8C, Folder 5.

[27] To be more precise, 25,000 during 1940; 44,000 during 1941; and 16,000 during 1942. Philip B. Conard, 'Human Tragedy of the European Refugee', report-speech presented to the AFSC Committee and at other public meetings during February-April 1943; AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, #456-599 (2 January-26 August 1943)'.

[28] Of the total figure, 7,562 went to the USA (59.5%); 2,569 to Cuba (20.2%); 997 to Mexico (7.8%); and 478 to Argentina (3.75%). See 'Combined Summary of Sailings arranged by JDC during 1940-1942' (7 September 1944); JDC, Reel 80, Folder 369.

[29] Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 91. Avni bases his estimate of 30,000 on the internal reports of HICEM, which, according to the Israeli historian, give the figure of 10,500 Jews passing through Portugal with HICEM's support between the fall of France and the end of 1942. I have not been able to replicate this figure based on the same HICEM reports. My understanding is that HICEM assisted the migration of no less than 12,801 Jews during that period, but this figure includes those who sailed from the Port of Marseille (and therefore is inconclusive as to peninsular sailings): 1,538 migrated between July and December 1940; 2,856 between January and July 1941; 3,528 between July and December 1941; and 4,879 during the year 1942. See 'Report on the HIAS-ICA Activities in Lisbon' (18 December 1941); and 'Statistiques pour l'Année 1942' (undated); both in YIVO, RG-245.4, Series I, File XII, MKM-15.30.

[30] Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust*, 48-9.

The Transportation Crisis

If there is one recurring theme that permeates the experience of Jewish refugees seeking to migrate beyond the Iberian Peninsula, it is the scarcity and unreliability of transatlantic transportation. Although demand for shipping accommodation skyrocketed following the outbreak of war, the transportation crisis became most acute following the fall of France in June 1940. As their respective countries were drawn into the conflict, Dutch, Italian, and later Greek shipping companies discontinued their sailings to Lisbon. During the summer, most regular sailings from the Peninsula dwindled in frequency or were interrupted altogether. During the chaotic summer of 1940, barely 500 Jews managed to leave Lisbon on four different sailings.[31] The largest US-flag shipping company, the American Export Lines (AEL), was also the only one sailing to the Iberian Peninsula. It operated four passenger-freighters between Lisbon and New York: the SS *Exeter*, the SS *Excalibur*, the SS *Excambion*, and the SS *Siboney*. Due to the high number of US citizens going back to their home country, however, AEL sailings were fully booked for months and did not represent a viable solution for most Jews seeking to leave Europe.[32]

The transportation situation improved somewhat at the beginning of 1941, when Portuguese and Spanish sailings began taking refugees to the Western Hemisphere, and despite uncertain schedules, long delays, and frequent cancellations. From Lisbon, there were Portuguese shipping companies that sailed to Canada, Mexico, and the USA. One was the *Companhia Colonial de Navegação* (CCN), which operated the SS *Carvalho Araújo*, the SS *Colonial,* the SS *Guinée*, the SS *Mouzinho*, and the SS *Serpa Pinto*. The other one was the *Companhia Nacional de Navegação* (CNN), which ran the SS

[31] This figure is based on those who sailed with HICEM, and does not include those who migrated on their own. Unfortunately, accurate figures for this period are lacking due to the chaos that ensued the fall of Western Europe. 'Report on the HIAS-ICA Activities in Lisbon (18 December 1941); YIVO, RG-245.4, Series I, File XII, MKM-15.30, A-2.

[32] In March 1941, the PAC pressed the US Maritime Commission to allow the two luxury ships SS *Washington* and SS *Manhattan*, of the United States Lines (USL) to operate the Lisbon route, but this option was rejected for fear that the Nazis would sink these large vessels. Wyman, *Paper Walls*, 153.

Angola, the SS *Quanza*, the SS *Lourenço Marques*, the SS *Nyassa*, and the SS *São Tomé*. From Spain, there were three shipping companies navigating to North and South America. The *Compañía Trasatlántica Española* (CTE) connected the port of Bilbao with the US and Cuba, via Vigo and Lisbon, aboard the SS *Magallanes* and the SS *Marqués de Comillas*. The Barcelona-based *Compañía Transmediterránea* (CTM) sailed from the Catalan capital to the Americas, via Tangier and Lisbon, on the SS *Ciudad de Sevilla,* the SS *Villa de Madrid,* and the SS *Isla de Tenerife*. Finally, the Sevilla-based *Ybarra Line* (YL) operated two ships that sailed to South America, calling at Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo, and Buenos Aires. One was the SS *Cabo de Hornos*, which the Atlantic coast of the Peninsula, from Bilbao, via Vigo, Lisbon, and Cádiz, before going into high seas. Her sister ship, the SS *Cabo de Buena Esperanza*, followed the Spanish Mediterranean coast, from Barcelona, via Cádiz, and Lisbon, before crossing the Atlantic.[33]

Although most of the refugee traffic out of the Iberian Peninsula concerned maritime transport, there were also a very limited number of air routes available to the wealthiest refugees. In 1937, *Deutsche Lufthansa* and Pan American Airways (PAN AM) were the first airlines to offer regular air transportation between Lisbon and New York. In April 1938, the *British Overseas Airways Corporation* (BOAC) began flying from the Portuguese capital to London. From 1939, PAN AM also connected Lisbon and New York on long-range amphibious airliners. Following the fall of France, however, the much coveted 'clippers' were practically unavailable even for US citizens, as most aircraft space was reserved for US government personnel and mail. During 1941 and 1942, PAN AM increased the frequency of these flights from three to seven days a week, but even then, few were the refugees who could afford its exorbitant prices —anywhere between $525 and $1,000.[34] The Portuguese company *Aero Portuguesa* offered an air service connecting Lisbon with Casablanca, but this route was discontinued after the fall of France. For

[33] See steamline schedule and information in YIVO, RG-245.5, MKM-17.13, France II-205.
[34] Dorothy Bonnell, 'Current Information: Bulletin No. 1 (16 April 1941); USHMM, RG-67.007M, Series IX, Box 70, Folder 46. US Embassy in Lisbon, 'Information for Travellers' (21 November 1941); NARA, RG-84, Box 51. See also Pimentel, *Judeus em Portugal*, 175-6.

refugees in possession of tickets for one of the French ships calling at Casablanca, there was still a weekly airplane route between Lisbon and Tangier, but this service was equally hard to book as the plane had capacity for just eight passengers at a time. Some refugees managed to cross the Strait of Gibraltar on one of the a ferry steamers that connected the Spanish Port of Algeciras with Tangiers, from where they were able to continue to Casablanca.[35]

Due to the scarcity of transportation facilities the Lisbon steamship market became full of speculators, and ship passage prices rose well above the official rates set by shipping companies. During the fall of 1940, there were refugees who paid as much as $192 for a third-class ship passage from Lisbon to New York. By February 1941, a similar booking could easily reach $350.[36] Chartering a whole boat was the best way to avoid speculation, but the Jewish agencies in Lisbon were not in a position to take such financial responsibility at a time when boats rarely sailed on schedule, which caused many refugees' visas to expire. An exception was done on 10 July 1941, when the JDC decided to do a trial and charter the SS *Mouzinho*, which took nearly 800 Jewish refugees to the USA.[37] **HERE**

After much insistence, JDC and HICEM managed to persuade the Portuguese shipping companies that it was in their best interest to discourage speculation. This allowed the Jewish organisations to reserve several hundred places for each sailing to the Americas. Initially, Jewish organisations had to pay the total amount of the booking upfront. If the refugee could not sail for whatever reason (i.e visas expiring, impossibility to release them from prison) one half of the booking cost would be returned to them by the shipping agency, while the other half would be lost unless the Jewish organisations could find somebody else to take their spot. From early 1943, this arrangement was simplified in a way that benefited both parties: only half of the ship booking

[35] H. Earle Russell, US Consul-General in Casablanca, to Cordell Hull, US Secretary of State, 'Routes of Travel from Lisbon to Morocco' (2 June 1941); NARA, RG-84, Box 41.
[36] Schaefer, *Portugal e os Refugiados Judeus*, 193.
[37] 'Report on the HIAS-ICA Activities in Lisbon (18 December 1941); YIVO, RG-245.4, Series I, File XII, MKM-15.30, A-2.

would have to be paid in advance, an amount that would then be transferred to a different passenger on a different sailing if the refugee was unable to sail.[38]

Another obstacle to migration was the dire financial situation of Jewish refugees fleeing the Reich. In 1933, German Jews could take no more than 200 RM ($47) in foreign currency upon leaving Germany; by 1937 this amount had been reduced to 10 RM ($4).[39] The JDC had already worked out a solution to this problem in the weeks following the outbreak of war in September 1939, when the JDC partnered with Amsterdam's Committee for Jewish Refugees (*Comité voor Joodsche Vluchtelingen*) to provide financial assistance to Jewish émigrés from Greater Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, and Luxembourg. By 1 January 1940, this service, which became known as *Service de Transmigration,* was transferred to Brussels. Following the German invasion of Belgium on 10 May, this office was closed, its records were lost, and all emigration activities suspended for several weeks. Fortunately, the staff managed to transfer the remaining funds to the JDC in the US. On 21 June 1940, the 'Transmigration Bureau' resumed its activities from its new office in New York.[40] The purpose of the Transmigration Bureau was twofold: to administer cash deposits made by friends and relatives to cover the fares and travel expenses of Jewish refugees in Europe; and to put these funds at the disposal of the central Jewish committees in Berlin, Prague, Bratislava, and Danzig for that purpose.[41] This was done by means of an international clearance arrangement. Refugees in Greater Germany deposited their *Reichsmarks* with the closest central Jewish organisation, and JDC met this amount with the funds made available to the Transmigration Bureau in New York.[42]

The work of the Transmigration Bureau boomed in early 1941

[38] Vizconde de Aliatar, *Agencia Marítima Trasatlántica* (AMT), representing Ybarra Line, Madrid, to HICEM Lisbon (9 December 1940); and HICEM Lisbon to AMT-Ybarra Line, Madrid (1 February 1943); YIVO, RG-245.6, MKM-14.25 and MKM-14.27 respectively.
[39] Wischnitzer, 'Jewish Emigration', 43.
[40] See memorandum by Irwin Rosen (23 November 1940); JDC, Reel 80, Folder 368.
[41] These were the *Reichsvereinigung* in Berlin, the *Kultusgemeinde* in Prague, the *Kultusgemeinde* in Bratislava, and the *Synagogengemeinde* in Danzig.
[42] Moses A. Leavitt, JDC Executive Vice-Chairman, to Mark Trail, Executive Director, Jewish Federation of Trenton (31 October 1941); JDC, Reel 79, Folder 365.

consequence of the 'unblocking' of immigration quotas announced by the US State Department on 18 December 1940. This meant that visa applicants who stood high on consular waiting lists and were in possession of steamship bookings to the US would be allowed to take the place of candidates who despite ranking higher on the waiting list were unable to sail.[43] A second aggravating factor was AEL's mid-February announcement that the Lisbon-New York route was solidly booked until New Year's Eve of 1942.[44] Consequently, crowds of up to six hundred people began to queue daily outside the offices of the Transmigration bureau in New York carrying consular cablegrams stating that their friends and relatives in Europe could expect a US visa if they deposited the steamship passage money with this office. Between the last week of February and the first week of March 1941, the Transmigration Bureau received deposits for value of $1,250,000, that is, more than four times the total balance of cash deposits made to that office since it was established in June 1940.[45]

During the month of June 1941, the US government introduced a series of measures that evinced a new phase in the country's transition from active neutrality to war. The consequences of some of these policies on the refugees were devastating. On 5 June, the US State Department instructed its diplomatic missions in Europe to withhold visas from aliens if they had close relatives (i.e. parents, children, spouse, or siblings) in a country under Axis control, including Vichy France. This made it extremely difficult for most Jewish refugees in Europe to migrate to the US.[46] On 14 June, Washington issued an executive order 'freezing' German and Italian assets in the US, as well as those from all other countries in Europe —except for Great Britain, Ireland, and Turkey— until the US government could verify that such funds were not beneficial to the Axis powers. Additionally, this order also gave the US Treasury complete

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[43] See press release by the US State Department, in Department Bulletin, Vol. 3 (18 December 1940); FDRL, Selected Digitized Documents Related to the Holocaust and Refugees, 1933-1945, File 3186.
[44] James Vail, AFSC Lisbon, 'Report' (20-22 April 1941); AFSC, Box 4, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, #184 to #455 (3 January-31 December 1942)' [sic].
[45] JDC press release (20 March 1941); JDC, Reel 79, Folder 364.
[46] See press release by the US State Department, in Departmental Bulletin, Vol. 4 (5 June 1941); RG-59, Box 156, 1534 and 1535.

supervision over all funds sent from the US to the Europe, whether to help cover the emigration costs of refugees, or to fund the work of relief organisations. In practice, this meant that relief organisations could not sent funds to Europe without first obtaining a special US Treasury licence.[47]

On 16 June, the sinking of several American vessels by German U-boats, together with mounting evidence that German consuls played a crucial role in networks of German espionage and propaganda in the US, led Washington to demand the closure of all German consulates in the US. In retaliation, Berlin ordered the closure of all US consulates in Germany and German-occupied territories. By mid-July, the only US consulates that remained operative in continental Europe where those in Unoccupied France, Spain, Portugal, and Switzerland —an 'island refuge'. This meant that persons in countries under Nazi control had to reach one of those neutral territories in order to apply for —or renew their— US visas. But for the majority of refugees in Nazi-occupied Europe this was an impossible task. Let us take, for instance, the case of Amsterdam resident Otto Frank, German businessman and father of celebrated diarist Anne Frank. In order to obtain visas for the US, Frank would have had to obtain an exit visa for the Netherlands; transit visas for Belgium, occupied, and non-occupied France; and reach the Iberian Peninsula with his whole family, or else his application would have been rejected by US consular authorities on the ground that he had close relatives in Nazi-controlled territory.[48]

Furthermore, in the last week of June the US State Department announced that —beginning on 1 July— all immigration quotas were to be centralised and handled by the US State Department, which meant that all visa applications had to be sent to Washington for preliminary approval before they were referred to the consuls in Europe, who still had the last word on the issuance of visas. In Washington, visa applications were placed before an

[47] See Executive Order No. 8785 (14 June 1941) amending No. 8389 (10 April 1940), issued following the German invasion of Norway and Denmark. Cited in William H. Reeves, 'The Control of Foreign Funds by the United States Treasury', *Law and Contemporary Problems* 17:60 (Spring 1945), 24.
[48] Breitman et al., *Refugees and Rescue*, 260-3.

interdepartmental committee composed of representatives from the Visa Division of the Department of State; the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the Department of Justice; the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department; and the Office of Naval Intelligence of the Navy Department. Additionally, visa applicants also had to submit, besides all previously required documentation, a biographical statement and two affidavits —of support and sponsorship— that had to be completed by a US citizen or permanent resident in the US before a notary.[49]

Although the US State Department maintained that these new immigration regulations were not intended to cut down immigration, their practical implementation often posed serious obstacles to refugees desirous to leave Europe. In Barcelona, for instance, US Consul-General Arthur C. Frost was criticised for demanding that Jewish refugees submit solid proof that they had no close relatives in Axis-controlled territory, such as family books. For this reason, only 27 of the nearly 300 Jews who reached Barcelona in September 1941 were granted US visas, even though the interdepartmental committee in Washington had already given its preliminary approval.[50] Dr Samuel Sequerra, who represented the JDC in Barcelona, accused Frost of creating a 'vicious circle' by refusing to grant Washington-approved US visas to Jews unless they first obtained Portuguese transit visas: 'He thus creates a vicious circle, since Portugal, just as every other country in the world, will not grant a transit visa before the end visa has been issued'.[51] Many refugees in Nazi-occupied territory tried to circumvent this bureaucratic maze by paying high sums of money for fraudulent visas to Costa Rica, Cuba, Siam, or Curaçao, with the sole purpose of reaching Portugal's safety.[52] According to Jewish scholar Mark Wischnitzer, US consulates in Nazi territory issued as many as 15,000 Cuban visas to Jews from Greater Germany between July and October 1941, of whom as many as

[49] See 'Visa-Control Regulations', in *The Department of State Bulletin* 13:327 (30 September 1945), 495-7; and Hull, Telegram-Circular Nos. 23 and 25, to US Consulate in Tangier (23 and 25 June 1941); NARA, RG-84, Box 47.
[50] 'Fear Sweeps Jews in Nazi Lands as Press vows Vengeance for Roosevelt Speech', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (2 November 1941).
[51] Sequerra, 'Memorandum on the Situation in Spain' [ca. 2 October 1941]; JDC, Reel 69, Folder 914.
[52] Pimentel, *Judeus em Portugal*, 196-9.

3,500 may have been able to reach Portugal.[53] Notwithstanding the need to renew their permits every month, live in forced residence, and being constantly surveilled by the PVDE, they succeeded in saving their lives. But for the majority of Jewish persons under Nazi jurisdiction, the US immigration regulations of June 1941 had a calamitous effect. When compared to the first six months of 1941, the number of quota immigrants reaching the US between July and December 1941 dropped from 18,734 to 9,158 —a figure which includes those who obtained US visas prior to the momentous visa policy changes of the summer.[54]

The affair of the SS *Navemar* is a perfect example of the agony and desperation that characterised the experience of Jewish refugees in the second half of 1941. In mid-June 1941 —possibly in reaction to the first changes to US visa policy in early June— Portuguese authorities suddenly stopped issuing transit visas to Jewish refugees in France. Since many of their protégés in France had US visas that neared the expiration date, HICEM booked 300 passages on the Spanish cargo ship SS *Navemar*, of the *Compañía Española de Navegación Marítima* (CENM) at the high price of $366 for USA, and $525 for Cuba. Despite CENM's assurances to HICEM that the ship, which had been reconverted for passenger use, would sail with no more than 600 passengers on board, the shipping company sold and additional 880 places to JDC for refugees coming from Nazi-occupied territories. This brought the the number of refugees who had bookings on the *Navemar* to 1,180. If we consider that the 5,301-tonnage freighter, which had a theoretical capacity for no more than 28 passengers, was ready to accommodate some 400 persons after being refurbished for the occasion, we can imagine the level of despair that permeated the air.[55] With the new US immigration regulations looming over the refugees, many saw the Spanish freighter as their last opportunity to sail to the Americas while their visas were still in force. James Bernstein, who represented HICEM

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[53] Wischnitzer, *To Dwell in Safety*, 235.
[54] Wyman, *Paper Walls*, 204.
[55] After adjusting these figures to those of the SS *St Louis*, which had a gross tonnage of 16,732 and carried 973 passengers in its 1939 infamous voyage, it follows that the SS *Navemar* carried nearly four times as many passengers per ton than the German ocean liner.

in Lisbon, put it this way:

> 'having no other sailing opportunity, tired out with the heat and bad food, with the impending danger of an epidemic, terrified also with the prospects of being sent to a Spanish concentration camp where detained emigrants are shot by groups every night for no other reason than the shortage of food, there was not one emigrant among the 1,100 who would have refused to sail'.[56]

Next came the preparations. Initially, the *Navemar* was due to sail from the Port of Cadiz on 10 July and call on Lisbon four days later. But shortly before the sailing, with the refugees already in Cádiz, the Spanish government informed the shipping company that the *Navemar* would have to sail from Bilbao instead, and later from Seville, thus resulting in a three-week delay, expenses for value of more than $8,000 to be covered by the Jewish organisations, and the expiration of 219 US visas.[57] After consultation with Washington, these visas would be renewed during the eight days that the ship lay at anchor off the Port of Lisbon. Since passengers were not allowed ashore, any US visas expiring while at the port of Lisbon were accepted as having expired on the journey.[58]

The 48-day-long voyage of the *Navemar* began on 7 August 1941, when the Spanish freighter left Seville bound for New York and Havana. After a brief stopover in Cádiz, the *Navemar* reached Lisbon on 8 August, where it was held for eight days to allow US consular officials in Lisbon to renew nearly 250 expired visas to refugees onboard. To speed up the process, the US consulate in Lisbon even mobilised a large number of American diplomats who had recently been expelled from Nazi-occupied countries and were waiting for new assignments at the Portuguese capital.[59] Despite the terrible food and hygienic

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[56] Bernstein, HICEM Lisbon, to HIAS New York (22 September 1941); YIVO, RG-245.4; Series I, File XII, MKM-13.32, B-26.

[57] Bernstein, HICEM Lisbon to HIAS New York (18 August 1941); YIVO, RG-245.4, Series I, File XII, MKM-13.32, B-24.

[58] This was the case, of Elisabeth Rottenstein, a sixteen-year-old Viennese orphan of Dutch Jewish origin, whose US visa expired three days before the sailing of the *Navemar*. See Conard to Philadelphia (16 September 1941); USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 3612, Elisabeth Rottenstein.

[59] 'Consuls Mobilized in Lisbon to Speed Reissuing of Visas to Navemar Refugees', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (14 August 1941).

conditions onboard, the Portuguese police refused to allow any passenger on their soil other than for the purpose of renewing their expired visas. Owing to the dire scarcity of goods and in post-civil war Spain, ship operators had not been able to secure basic goods such as drinking water, foodstuffs, and toilet and washing supplies. Certainly not enough to cope with the needs of the *Navemar*'s 1,180 passengers, whom a news correspondent in Lisbon described as 'hollow-eyed broken men and women, and listless, feverish children lying in stifling heat'.[60] To alleviate the situation, the HICEM and JDC representatives in Lisbon persuaded the steamer's operators to allow local ship peddlers to approach the *Navemar* to sell bread, sardines, chocolate, and fruit to the half-starved passengers, while local lighter boats discharged drinking water into the ship's tanks in preparation for its long transatlantic journey.[61]

Overcrowding and the poor hygienic situation on board were the most pressing issues. Since deck space available was so limited, most passengers were forced to remain most of the time in four huge unventilated dormitories that had been improvised in the cargo ship's holds below deck. These comprised row after row of double-tiered bunks, with no portholes, and a single deck hatch as only source of ventilation. The Berlin-born refugee and future Princeton literature professor, Victor Brombert, described it in this way: 'caught between the relentless bright sun above, and the damp, airless stench below, we were like restless souls moving up and down a floating underworld'.[62] The luckiest refugees were those who managed to appropriate the lifeboats on the main deck, where they could sleep with relative comfort. In the absence of refrigeration facilities, a stall had to be built on the afterdeck to accommodate six live oxen that would be the main source of nutrition for the duration of the trip. Naturally, sickness spread uncontrollably in those unsanitary conditions. Virtually none of the *Navemar* passengers escaped an attack of dysentery at some point during the trip, and six persons died of disease while on high seas.

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[60] 'Plight of 1,100 Refugees on Spanish Freighter Described by JTA Correspondent', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (13 August 1941).

[61] 'Navemar Expected to Sail from Lisbon This Week', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (15 August 1941).

[62] Victor Brombert, *Trains of Thought: Memories of a Stateless Youth* (New York: Norton, 2002), 213-4.

‘When the story of the Navemar is all told —wrote the Yiddish-language author Zalman Shneur aboard the infamous ship— it will sound like something out of the Dark Ages’.[63] On 7 September, the *Navemar* reached Cuba, where about 360 refugees holding cuban visas were admitted. On the way to the US, a few critically-ill passengers were hospitalised at Bermuda.[64] At last, on 12 September, the remaining 787 refugees reached New York, where the freighter —such must have been the situation on board— was put in quarantine. It took five hours to the doctors of the US Public Health Service to give passengers, crew, and ship, ‘one of the most thorough examinations ever undertaken in the port of New York’.[65] Naturally, the terrible experience of the SS *Navemar* prompted significant public and media attention. *Time* magazine nicknamed it ‘SS Nevermore’.[66] Some of its passengers referred to it as ‘schnorrer-ship’ (‘schnorrer’: Yiddish for tramp or beggar). Others borrowed the term coined coined by the European director of the JDC office in Lisbon, Dr. Joseph Schwartz, who described the ship as a ‘floating concentration camp’.[67] No wonder then that 593 *Navemar* passengers filed claims for refund against the Spanish shipping company for value of $3,477,629, accounting for ticket refunds, and personal and property damage.[68]

To prevent legal action against them on similar grounds, Spanish and Portuguese shipping companies serving transatlantic sailings began to require that all passengers sign a mandatory document stating that they had examined the conditions aboard the ship and were perfectly satisfied with them — ironically, before the passengers were allowed onboard.[69] In retaliation for the

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[63] Cited in ‘Refugees End Horror Voyage on Ship Called Floating Concentration Camp’, *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (14 September 1941).
[64] ‘Refugee Ship Navemar Disembarks 360 Refugees at Havana’, *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (8 September 1941).
[65] Henry Super, ‘War Refugees Tell of Horror Aboard “Hell Ship” in Flight from Europe’, *The Washington Post* (13 September 1941).
[66] ’S.S. Nevermore’, *Time* 38:12 (22 September 1941).
[67] See ‘Refugee Ship Navemar Sails from Lisbon En Route to Cuba and New York’, *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (18 August 1941).
[68] ‘Refugees Sue Owners of S.S. “Navemar” for $3,400,000 Damages’, *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (29 January 1942). For more details see the papers of Saul Sterling, lawyer and *Navemar* passenger who represented 251 of the 593 claimants in the lawsuit against the CENM; in LBI, AR-3857.
[69] Elizabeth A. Dexter, *Last Port to Freedom* (Unpublished draft, [ca. 1943]), 125; in Dexter Papers, Box 2, File 4.

lawsuit against the *Navemar*, the Spanish government forbid Spanish shipping companies from selling tickets to the US and Cuba to 'individuals of the Jewish race', under threat of heavy fines.[70] It is not clear for how long did this prohibition apply, or to what extent was it enforced.[71]

The best way to measure its real impact is by looking at the comprehensive sailing statistics of the JDC, which account for all sailings arranged by JDC and HICEM from the Iberian Peninsula. Thus, in the nearly ten months that spanned between 1 January and the order of 23 October 1941, there were at least 2,519 Jews who left the Iberian Peninsula on Spanish vessels. By contrast, only 142 Jews sailed with Spanish shipping companies in the fourteen months that passed between the ban was issued through the end of 1942, representing a reduction of 94.7 per cent —or 96 per cent after adjusting the time scale. It follows that the Francoist order, whilst not flawlessly applied, greatly reduced the transport possibilities available to Jewish refugees in the Iberian Peninsula.[72] For the sake of comparison, it is worth noting that Portuguese shipping companies, which in the year 1941 removed 4,745 Jews from the Peninsula, sailed with no less than 4,506 during 1942, hence showing no significant reduction.[73]

A second and equally important question relates to the timing of the Spanish ban of 23 October 1941. The fact that the Franco regime barred 'individuals of the Jewish race' from its ships on the same day that the Nazi regime banned the exit of Jews from German-occupied territory, raises questions as to whether the Spanish prohibition was merely a retaliatory

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[70] According to the order, this ban would not affect the sailing of the SS *Isla de Tenerife*, which was due to sail by the end of October 1941 with 246 Jews on board. See Jesús M. de Rotaeche, Director General of Maritime Communications, Ministry of Industry and Trade (23 October 1941); AGA, AMAE, R-1190-83-6.

[71] According to the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, this order applied only to the two ships operated by the CTE: the SS *Marqués de Comillas*, and SS *Magallanes*. According to JDC statistics, however, the SS *Marqués de Comillas* and the SS *Magallanes* took at least 59 and 23 Jews respectively to the Western Hemisphere by the end of 1942. See 'Spanish Shipping Line refusing to take Jewish passengers', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (24 October 1941).

[72] From these 142 Jewish persons, 80 sailed in the last nine weeks 1941, and 62 during the year 1942, mostly to countries in South America.

[73] These are minimum figures based on JDC statistics. There surely were Jews who sailed without their assistance, but unfortunately, there are no reliable figures. See 'Financial and Statistical Studies for the Years 1940-1942 of migration activities administered by JDC' (20 September 1944); JDC, Reel 80, Folder 369.

measure against the SS *Navemar* lawsuit, or whether was it resulted from concerted collaboration with Nazi Germany in preparation for the 'Final Solution'.

On that same day of 23 October 1941, Himmler ordered the immediate end to Jewish migration from Nazi-occupied Europe.[74] This decision marked the end to Berlin's policy of forcing the emigration of Jews from all areas under German influence, which had been an implicit aim of Nazi anti-Jewish policy since 1933, and a goal explicitly enforced following the annexation of Austria and the Sudetenland in 1938. This policy of forced migration was first amended on 20 May 1941, when —'given the Final Solution (*Endlösung der Judenfrage*) which will undoubtedly come about'— Göring ordered the immediate halt to Jewish migration from Belgium and France. This act, which aimed at accelerating the exit of Jews from the Reich, had a lot to do with the shortage of transportation from the Iberian Peninsula: 'as there are currently insufficient possibilities of emigration even for the Jews in the area of the Reich, largely via Spain and Portugal, emigration of Jews from France and Belgium would mean renewed curtailment of such possibilities'.[75] Over the summer, the Final Solution began to take shape. The German invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June marked the beginning of a stage of Nazi anti-Jewish violence: the mass shooting of the Jews of Eastern Europe by mobile killing squads (*Einsatzgruppen*). On 31 July 1941, *Reichsmarschall* Göring trusted Heydrich with 'making all the necessary preparations with regard to organizational, practical, and financial aspects for an overall solution (*Gesamtlösung*) of the Jewish

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[74] See order by Heinrich Müller, Chief of the Gestapo, to the heads of the *Sicherheitspolizei* (SiPo) and the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD) in France and Belgium (23 October 1941). Cited in Peter Longerich and Dieter Pohl (eds.), *Die Ermordung der europäischen Juden: Eine umfassende Dokumentation des Holocaust, 1941-1945* (Munich: Piper, 1989), 82. To rationalise this decision, the Nazis blamed Jewish émigrés as instigators of anti-German sentiment in the US. In particular, they accused Jewish refugees of having brought to the attention of President Roosevelt a map demonstrating secret Nazi plans to subjugate the South American continent. This map had been mentioned previously by the US president during his 'Navy Day Address' of 27 October 1941. See 'Fear Sweeps Jews in Nazi Lands as Press vows Vengeance for Roosevelt Speech', *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (2 November 1941).

[75] Walter Schellenberg, RSHA Berlin, to all chiefs of SD and SiPo in Berlin and France (20 May 1941). Cited in session No. 92 of Eichmann's trial proceedings. State of Israel, Ministry of Justice, *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann: Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1992), Vol. 4, 1617.

question in the German sphere of influence in Europe'.[76] As suggested by recent scholarship, the decision to systematically murder every Jew within German reach was reached sometime between late September and early October 1941.[77] In the same month of October, the SS decided to deport more than 22,000 Jews to the ghettos of Warsaw, Łódź, Lublin̈, and the former Soviet cities of Riga and Minsk, where they would face death by starvation.[78] On 25 November, with the Nazi death machine already running, the Nazi government issued the 11th supplementary decree to the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, which empowered the German Reich to automatically confiscate the property of all Jews who were no longer residents of the Reich —whether due to flight or deportation— and stripped them of their nationality.[79]

Against the backdrop of Nazi extermination plans, the situation of the now stateless Jewish refugees in the Iberian Peninsula was also aggravated following the US declaration of war on 8 December 1941. The AEL suspended its sailings to the Iberian Peninsula altogether. The Spanish government by suspending all Spanish sailings to the US —from now on they would only call at the ports of Latin America.[80] In Portugal, the PVDE arrested a number of Jewish refugees, who were left incommunicado for no apparent reason. Amongst them were several refugees who volunteered at the Lisbon offices of HICEM, USC, and JDC, including the head of the Jewish Community of Luxembourg, Albert Nussbaum.[81] According to Elizabeth Dexter, there were also several instances in which the Gestapo arrested refugees at Caldas da Rainha who were allegedly Nazi opponents.[82] By mid-1942, however, relations

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[76] Göring to Heydrich, Director of RSHA (31 July 1941). Cited in Arad, et al., *Documents on the Holocaust*, 233.
[77] See Christopher R. Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 424.
[78] See map 92, in Martin Gilbert, *The Routledge Atlas of the Holocaust* (4th ed. London: Routledge, 2009), 67.
[79] David Fraser, and Frank Caestecker, 'Jews or Germans? Nationality Legislation and the Restoration of Liberal Democracy in Western Europe after the Holocaust', *Law and History Review* 31:2 (May 2013), 395-6.
[80] Philip A. Conard, AFSC Lisbon, to his family (3 January 1942); Young Men's Christian Association Archives, Y.USA.62 (henceforth Conard Papers), Box 1.
[81] Joy, Lisbon, to Dexter, Boston (13 January 1942); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 18.
[82] Elizabeth A. Dexter, *Last Port to Freedom* (Unpublished draft, [1943]), 169-70; in Dexter Papers, Box 2, File 4.

with the Portuguese police had improved substantially.[83]

[83] Elizabeth A. Dexter to Gano (3 September 1942); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 20.

The Iberian Peninsula and the Axis

Despite the many similarities between Salazarist Portugal and Francoist Spain —both were deeply Catholic, authoritarian, and conservative regimes that opposed liberal-democratic and communist ideologies— it would be a great mistake to assume that the would behave similarly during World War II. Officially, neither of the two governments joined the war on either side, and yet, their attitude during the conflict was largely influenced by their opposing political allegiances. Whilst Salazar's Portugal remained hopeful that the Allies would prevail, the Francoists were as convinced of the inevitability of an Axis victory as they yearned to be part of this new fascist European order. This dichotomy has led some scholars to describe Portugal as an 'Allied neutral', and Spain as an 'Axis neutral'.[84] While that assessment of Portugal is rather accurate, that of Spain is somewhat problematic, not least because the Franco regime was not neutral but 'non-belligerent' during the crucial period of June 1940 to October 1943.[85]

Much of the explanation why Spain never formally declared war can be credited to Salazar's efforts to keep the Iberian Peninsula neutral.[86] Possibly due to his neighbour's bellicosity —after all, Franco's 'New Spain' had been born out of the flames of a brutal civil war— Salazar's attitudes towards the Franco regime oscillated between fears of a Spanish invasion, and sympathies for the its authoritarianism and anti-communism.[87] In view of the impending European conflict, however, both governments agreed that it was in their best interest to safeguard the integrity of the Iberian Peninsula while consolidating their regimes internally. On 17 March 1939, the two governments signed the

[84] Christian Leitz, *Nazi Germany and Neutral Europe During the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).

[85] Conventionally, the period of Spanish non-belligerence is considered to have ended with Franco's informal announcement of 1 October 1943. But even then, Spain did not return to full neutrality. Stanley G. Payne, *Franco and Hitler: Spain, Germany, and World War II* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 271.

[86] Maria Inácia Rezola, 'The Franco-Salazar Meetings: Foreign Policy and Iberian Relations during the Dictatorships (1942-1963)', *E-Journal of Portuguese History* 6:2 (Winter 2008): 1-11.

[87] Katherine Duff, 'Portugal', in Arnold Toynbee, and Veronica M. Toynbee (eds.). *The War and the Neutrals* (London: Oxford University Press & Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1956), 316-27.

Luso-Spanish Treaty of Friendship and Non-Aggression —also known as the 'Iberian Pact'— by which both sides pledged to respect and protect each other's territory, and to sign no pact or alliance that would lead to aggression against the other. Following the Franco-German armistice, and with the German army on the other side of the Pyrenees, both regimes felt apprehensive about the possibility of a German invasion of the Peninsula. The Franco government attempted to bring Portugal closer to the Axis sphere —and away from Britain— by making her join the anti-Comintern pact, but Salazar wanted nothing but Iberian neutrality.[88] As a result, the Salazarist and Francoist governments signed an Additional Protocol to the existing 'Iberian Pact' on 29 July 1940, which, although vaguely worded, was interpreted by both sides of the war as a sign that Spain and Portugal would defend themselves in the event of a foreign invasion.[89] Although fears of a German offensive against the Peninsula dissipated in June 1941, when the Axis armies marched against the Soviet Union; the Allied North African landings of November 1942, and the subsequent takeover of Vichy France by the Germans, left the Franco regime in particularly difficult position. Seeking to guarantee its survival by distancing itself from the Axis, the Franco government urged its Portuguese counterpart to form an 'Iberian Bloc' to defend the Peninsula. This alliance, which recognised the 'mutual friendship and everlasting peace' between the two Iberian states, was interpreted by the Allies as a sign that Spain no longer posed a threat to them, and that the Iberian Peninsula would remain neutral in the conflict.[90]

Portugal's neutrality, as well as its sympathies for the Allied cause, had been unequivocal from the beginning of the war. On 2 September 1939, the Portuguese press published an official declaration signed by António de Oliveira Salazar in which the head of state declared Portugal's neutrality, while

[88] Norman J.W. Goda, *Tomorrow the World: Hitler, Northwest Africa, and the Path towards America* (Texas: A&M University, 1998), 113-5.
[89] Meneses, *Salazar*, 253-5; See also Denys Smyth, *Diplomacy and Strategy of Survival: British Policy and Franco's Spain, 1940-41* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 34-5.
[90] António José Telo, *Portugal na Segunda Guerra* (Lisbon: Perspectivas & Realidades, 1987), 129-30. The citation is from Rezola, 'The Franco-Salazar Meetings', 6.

promising to observe 'the duties imposed by our alliance with England'.[91] The Anglo-Portuguese alliance, which may well be the oldest-standing in history, was first established in 1373 by King Edward III of England and King Ferdinand and Queen Eleanor of Portugal, and was subsequently ratified in numerous occasions through more than five hundred years.[92] Indeed, it was on the basis of the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1373 that the Winston Churchill approached Lisbon to request the establishment of air and naval military bases in the Azores archipelago in August 1943, and that the Salazar government agreed to their proposal.[93] Situated 1,500 km west of Portugal, the Azores islands gave the Allies an enormous strategic advantage in the Battle of the Atlantic. Thanks to the extended air coverage that the Azores provided, the Allies were finally able to defend troop and supply shippings sailing through the mid-Atlantic from the deadly 'wolfpack' formations (*Wolfsrudel*) of German U-boats.[94]

Francoist Spain, on the other hand, was morally and economically indebted to Nazi Germany for its crucial assistance during the Spanish Civil War, which came with a bill of 470,014,955 RM.[95] Spain's partnership with the Axis was formalised within days of the Nationalist victory over the Spanish Republican government on 1 April 1939. On 27 and 30 March respectively, Franco's Spain joined the Anti-Comintern Pact of 1936, and signed a Treaty of Friendship with Nazi Germany by which both governments pledged to 'avoid anything in the political, military and economic fields that might be disadvantageous to its treaty partner or of advantage to its opponent'.[96] On 8

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[91] Cited in Meneses, *Salazar*, 228.

[92] See Edgar Prestage, 'The Anglo-Portuguese Alliance', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 17 (1934), 69-100; and A. H. d'Araújo Stott Howorth, *A Aliança Luso-Britânica e a Segunda Guerra Mundial: Tentativa de Interpretação do seu Funcionamento* (Lisbon: Empresa Nacional de Publicidade, 1956), 43-5

[93] Winston Churchill, *The Second World War. Volume V: Closing the Ring* (London: Cassell & Co, 1952), 146-7; and Hugh Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1970), 123.

[94] Kenneth G. Weiss, *The Azores in Diplomacy and Strategy, 1940-1945* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, 1980).

[95] Christian Leitz, *Economic Relations between Nazi Germany and Franco's Spain, 1936-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 96.

[96] The German-Spanish Treaty of Friendship is reproduced in *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945*, Series D (1937-1945), Vol. 3: *Germany and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 1950), No. 773, 884-6.

May, the Franco government followed the example of his German and Italian counterparts and announced its withdrawal from the League of Nations; and on 22 May, it joined the Italo-German Pact of Steel. Following the outbreak of war in September 1939, Spain declared neutrality. On 13 June 1940, three days after Italy's declaration of war, the Franco regime shifted from neutrality to 'non-belligerency' —a term previously used by Mussolini's Italy to denote a state of pre-belligerency. Spain's new bellicose status was demonstrated the following day, when Franco's Moroccan corps occupied the International Zone of Tangier under the pretext that this was the best way to protect Tangier's neutrality in the conflict.[97]

Next, the Franco regime began negotiating the terms of Spain's declaration of war with Nazi Germany. These discussions reached an anticlimax on 23 October 1940, during the meeting between Franco and Hitler at the Franco-Spanish border in Hendaye. Despite nine hours of conversation between the two heads of state, the question of Spain's entry into the war remained unsolved. Whilst Spanish colonial ambitions in North Africa were irreconcilable with those of the French, Spain's weaker economic and military status convinced Hitler that Spanish belligerence was simply not worth alienating the France of Vichy. But Hendaye's disappointment did not thwart friendly relations between the two totalitarian regimes. Even though Francoist Spain never formally declared war, it remained Nazi Germany's *de facto* ally through the end of World War II.[98] The most tangible example of Francoist Spain's collaboration with the Axis was the Spanish Volunteer Division, also known as the 'Blue Division' (*División Azul*) after the blue shirt worn by the Spanish fascists of the Falange. Consisting of more than 47,000 Spanish volunteers integrated in the Wehrmacht's 250th Infantry Division, the Blue Division was deployed to the Russian front shortly after the onset of '*Operation Barbarossa*' in June 1941, and fought in several battles including the siege of

[97] Katherine Duff, 'Spain between the Allies and the Axis', in Toynbee and Toynbee (eds.), *The War and the Neutrals*, 256-315.

[98] Paul Preston, 'Franco and Hitler: the Myths of Hendaye 1940', *Contemporary European History* 1:1 (1992): 1-16; and Antonio Marquina Barrio, 'The Spanish Neutrality during the Second World War', *American University International Law Review* 14:1 (1998): 171-184.

Leningrad and the battle of Krasny Bor. Owing to mounting pressure from the Allied governments, the Franco regime ordered the withdrawal of the Blue Division in the autumn of 1943, although some refused to return and joined the German regular army or the *Waffen-SS*. These were mainly hard-line *Falangistas*, who believed that the war that had begun on Spanish soil in July 1936 would not reach conclusion until the complete annihilation of Soviet communism.[99]

From amongst the various groups that composed the Nationalist faction during the Spanish Civil War —e.g. the military, the Catholic Church, the CEDA, and the Monarchists— the Falange emerged as one of the most important pillars of the 'New Spain'. The Falange was the only political force tolerated in Franco's one-party Spain, and permeated almost every aspect of Spanish life: from censorship, propaganda, and national recreation, to the control of trade unions, and the repression of political dissidents.[100] Even the regime's main welfare organisation, *Auxilio Social*, depended on Falange's Women's Section, the *Sección Femenina*. Against this backdrop, it does not come as a surprise that the president of Falange's executive committee, Ramón Serrano Súñer was one of the most powerful men in National-Catholic Spain. Serrano Súñer —who also happened to be Franco's brother-in-law— had been Minister of the Interior since January 1938, and Minister of Public Order since August 1939. British Ambassador Sir Samuel Hoare saw Serrano Súñer as 'a fanatic in bad health'.[101] US Ambassador Carlton J. H. Hayes described him as 'cleverer and less principled' than Franco, 'a weather-vane of the fortunes of the war'.[102] The leader of the Falange was also one of the most ardent Hitler admirers within the Spanish government, and led the negotiations between the

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[99] On the Blue Division, see Xavier Moreno Julià, *La División Azul: Sangre Española en Rusia, 1941-1945* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2004); and Xosé M. Núñez Seixas, 'Spain', in Jochen Böhler, and Robert Gerwarth (eds.), *The Waffen-SS: A European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 99-119.

[100] Francoist Spain's single party emerged in April 1937 after the so-called 'Unification Decree' (*Decreto de Unificación*), when all prewar rightist groups were amalgamated under the *Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista* (FET y de las JONS), also known as the 'National Movement' (Movimiento Nacional)

[101] Sir Samuel Hoare, *Ambassador on Special Mission* (London: St. James's Place, 1946), 57.

[102] Hayes to President Roosevelt (30 June 1942); FDRL, Papers as President: the President's Secretary's File (henceforth PSF), Box 50, Folder 'Spain, 1940-1945'.

two countries in regards to war. In September 1940, before he formally became Franco's Minister of Foreign Affairs on 17 October 1940, Serrano Súñer travelled to Berlin to pave the way for the Hendaye meeting. While in the German capital, the chief of the Falange also invited *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler to visit Spain and advise the Franco regime on the modernisation of the Spanish police.[103]

Spanish-German police cooperation had formally begun during the Spanish Civil War. In November 1937, following Franco's wishes, the German government sent a team of experts headed by SS Colonel Heinz Jost —later commander of *Einsatzgruppe* A in the Baltic region— to share with the Spanish police the latest practices in the eradication of communist elements from Spanish society.[104] In April 1938, Himmler suggested widening collaboration between the two police forces. By virtue of the secret police agreement of 31 July 1938, the German and Spanish governments consented to the mutual exchange of information regarding the activities of 'communists, anarchists and émigrés' both within and outside their national territories; and pledged to cooperate in the extradition of dangerous individuals without the need for diplomatic mediation —in a 'direct, systematic, and speedy manner'.[105] Himmler was the first to exploit these treaty provisions, as the Gestapo initiated a hunt for German volunteers of the International Brigades who had fallen in Franco's hands. To carry out interrogations and arrange their repatriation to Germany, Himmler deployed special security agents throughout rebel Spain, who in turn, offered to train the Spanish police in the latest techniques developed in Nazi Germany to deal with the enemies of the state.[106] In September 1939, Ramón Serrano Súñer appointed his close friend José Finat y Escrivá de Romaní, Count of Mayalde, as chief of the DGS. One of Mayalde's

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[103] See See Paul Preston, *The Politics of Revenge: Fascism and the Military in 20th-century Spain* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), 47-104; and Antonio Marquina Barrio, 'La Etapa de Ramón Serrano Súñer en el Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores', *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma* 5:2 (1989): 145-67.

[104] Paul Preston, *The Spanish Holocaust: Inquisition and Extermination in Twentieth-Century Spain* (London: Harper Press, 2012), 486-490.

[105] The police agreement is fully reproduced in Manuel Ros Agudo, *La Guerra Secreta de Franco, 1939-1945* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2002), 182. My translations.

[106] Manuel Ros Agudo, *Franco/Hitler 1940: de la Gran Tentación al Gran Engaño* (Madrid: Arco Libros, 2009), 183.

first acts as chief of the police was to establish an Armed Police Corps —known as '*los Grises*' for their grey uniform— to repress and persecute the enemies of the state. For the purpose of studying police organisation, the Count of Mayalde visited Berlin in late August 1940, where he had several exchanges with the highest-ranking security officials in Nazi Germany: Kurt Daluege (*Ordnungspolizei*), Arthur Nebe (*Kriminalpolizei*), Reinhard Heydrich (*Sicherheitsdienst*, or SD), and Heinrich Himmler (*Schutzstaffel*, or SS). In gratitude for the treatment accorded to Mayalde, the chief of the SS was invited to visit Spain.

Himmler was welcomed with the highest pomp and circumstance in Madrid on 21 October 1940, two days prior to the meeting between Hitler and Franco at Hendaye. Besides attending a bullfight and visiting Madrid's archeological museum, Himmler's visit also served to establish closer police collaboration between the two fascist regimes. To please the Germans, the Franco government allowed agents of the Gestapo and the SD to be stationed in German diplomatic missions across Spain, and virtually gave them carte blanche to arrest, interrogate, and forcibly repatriate from Spanish territory any German citizen if they so desired. In return for such privileged status, German security forces agreed to assist Franco in the extradition of Spanish Republican leaders who had fled to France after the Republic's defeat. Disinterested in the fate of thousands of Spanish refugees who were still interned in camps across unoccupied France, Madrid authorised the German *Organisation Todt* to use between 35,000 and 50,000 Spanish prisoners in the construction of the 'Atlantic Wall' defences along the French coast. In addition to those coerced into forced-labour units, an additional 7,288 Spaniards were sent to the concentration camp in Mauthausen. Of that number, at least 4,676 —64 per cent— were worked to death in Mauthausen's SS-owned granite quarries.[107]

Spanish and German intelligence services also cooperated very closely, much to the benefit of the Nazis. Thanks to *Falange Exterior* —Falange's intelligence network in Spain and Latin America— agents of the Spanish fascist party provided crucial supplies to German U-boats throughout the war;

[107] Agudo, *La Guerra Secreta de Franco*, 177-198.

distributed pro-Axis propaganda in the Western Hemisphere; sabotaged Allied shipping; and submitted intelligence reports, for instance, on Allied ship movements across the Gibraltar Strait. Ironically, the same shipping companies that took hundreds of Jewish refugees to safety also served as Hitler's main avenue for spies and saboteurs bound for the Americas, and thus reinforced fifth-column fears in the US. In addition to smuggling Gestapo agents into the US, Spanish shipping agencies also assisted the German war effort by exporting war materials that were embargoed under the US Neutrality Act. On 15 December 1941, for instance, agents of the FBI seized the SS *Isla de Tenerife* as it was about to sail from the Port of New York with a cargo of more than 100 fifty-gallon drums of lubricating oil, $30,000 worth of airplane silk, and a large number of radio parts. The materials were confiscated, the company was fined $22,000, and the ship's captain and radio operator —Marcelino García and Manuel Díaz— were arrested.[108] As it turned out, these two men were not only agents of the *Compañía Trasatlántica Española* (CTE) in the US, and thus two of the most powerful men in Spanish-American shipping; they were also in charge of the flagship branch of the *Falange Exterior* in the US: *Casa de España*. Based at New York's Park Central Hotel, *Casa de España* had been a hub of Spanish fascist activity since the Spanish Civil War, in charge of distributing fascist propaganda and raising support for Franco's cause in the US. These activities had first come to the attention of the US Senate in May 1937, when Senator Gerald P. Nye denounced García and Díaz, rightly so, of being General Franco's spies and violating US neutrality in the Spanish conflict by exporting war material.[109] The two ship-owners rationalised these accusations in the following way: 'The press, in its majority Jewish, is rather hostile to our cause and while it advances the lies of the Reds (they make enormous propaganda) it makes efforts to belittle the success of our glorious army'.[110]

Meanwhile, the Count of Mayalde also sought police collaboration with

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[108] 'Spanish Ship Held; Radio Parts Seized', *Time* (16 December 1941); JDC, Reel 81, Folder 373.

[109] Allan Chase, *Falange: The Axis Secret Army in the Americas* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1943), 105-238.

[110] Cited in Government Publishing Office, Congressional Record (Bound Edition), Vol. 81, Part 11, (10 May 1937), 4270-4271.

the newly-born government of Vichy. On 2 August 1940, Mayalde invited the French government to cooperate in the 'regular exchange of information and the search for suspicious persons'.[111] The French Minister of the Interior, Marcel Peyrouton, received Mayalde's proposal in enthusiastic terms and invited the Spanish chief of police to travel to Vichy to discuss the matter. 'He sees nothing but advantages', wrote the French ambassador to Spain, François Piétri.[112] It is not clear whether the Pierre Laval administration ever signed any written agreement with the Spanish police, or whether their cooperation took place informally. In August 1941, the London-based Gaullist newspaper *France* published the text of a secret police agreement allegedly signed between the Laval and the Franco governments. According to this text, Spain pledged to assist in the suppression of Gaullist activities in Portugal in exchange for the right to station up to thirty Spanish agents across French territory —a bargain suspiciously similar to that obtained by Himmler during this visit to Spain.[113] In any case, it seems that the Franco regime attempted to deploy such agents to its consulates in Marseille, Perpignan, and Toulouse. Bewildered, the government of François Darlan claimed not to be aware of any Franco-Spanish police agreement signed by its predecessor, and protested for such breach of French national sovereignty.[114] In spite of this misunderstanding, the two governments reached an agreement in December 1941 concerning the extradition of irregular refugees. From then on, any undocumented person arrested by the police within five kilometres of the Franco-Spanish border would be returned to the authorities of the country of departure. As far as Spain is concerned, extraditions to France were carried out from any point in Spain's geography, sometimes when refugees were a few kilometres from reaching the

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[111] Comte Renom de la Baume, Vichy France's ambassador to Spain, to Paul Baudouin, Minister for Foreign Affairs (2 August 1940); *Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Centre d'Archives Diplomatiques de Nantes* (henceforth CADN), 396-PO/C1/512. My translation.
[112] François Piétri, Vichy France's Ambassador to Spain, to Mayalde, chief of DGS (27 September 1940); CADN, 396-PO/C1/512. My translation.
[113] See *France*'s issue of 4 August 1941, as attachment to Piétri's letter to François Darlan, Vice-President of the Council of Ministers (8 September 1941); CADN, 396-PO/C1/512.
[114] See Spanish Embassy in Paris, to French MFA, Vichy (19 December 1941); Darlan to Pierre Pucheu, French Minister of the Interior (16 January 1942); and Note Verbale of the French Embassy in Madrid, to the Spanish MFA (11 February 1942); CADN, 396-PO/C1/512.

Portuguese border.[115] The Czech Jewish refugee Hilda Klein, for instance, reached Spanish territory on 9 October 1940, and was deported back to France on 14 October 1940 after five days in the prison of Figueras (Gerona).[116] Likewise, Jacob Lewin, born in Chișinău (Romania), was interned at the Irún prison on 28 August 1940, and 'deported from the national territory' three days later.[117]

[115] The Franco-Spanish police agreement, as well as numerous examples of extraditions to France can be found in Calvet, *Las Montañas de la Libertad*, 88-96.
[116] See Hilda Klein's penitentiary file at AGA, Ministerio de Justicia, Dirección General de Prisiones, Tratamiento Penitenciario (henceforth TP), 8-13-1403-R.
[117] AGA, *Expedientes de la Dirección General de Seguridad*, (8)7.2.44 (henceforth DGS), Box 10404, No. 363461

The Persecution of Jews in the Iberian Peninsula

At the beginning of 1940, the Spanish DGS sent instructions to all Civil Governors in the country requesting detailed reports of all German Jews living in each Spanish province, with the aim of assessing whether arrest and expulsion were necessary.[118] After the fall of France, a most intense period of arrests and expulsions began at the hands of the Spanish police. These measures affected Jews from German, Austrian, Polish, and Czech origin who had found asylum in Spain during the 1930s, as well as some non-Jewish German dissidents. Rather than arresting them publicly, the DGS sent telegrams to all male Jewish refugees requesting them to travel to Madrid to report to the DGS headquarters, allegedly for the purpose of renewing their residence permit. Upon arrival to the Spanish capital, they were arrested, imprisoned, and given several days to arrange their emigration from Spain. Since this was nearly an impossible task at the time due to the lack of transportation facilities and the many bureaucratic obstacles to migration, the majority of them were thrown into the concentration camp at Miranda de Ebro (Burgos), or were repatriated to Germany. The US Consul-General in Barcelona, Arthur C. Frost, learnt through the lawyer of one of the victims that:

> 'Spanish authorities are resolved to expel all Jews living in Spain, that those who cannot be deported for lack of visas are to be put in concentration camps, and that the instigators of this movement are German members of the Gestapo who are personally directing it … Other Jews, who have not been molested as yet, are said to live in constant fear of detention and to be attempting frantically to obtain visas for countries on the American continent'.[119]

Thanks to the refugee case files of the AFSC, it has been possible to identify some of the victims of this policy. The professional violinist Siegfried Goldenkranz was arrested on 17 June 1940 and spent two years and seven

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118 DGS Madrid, to Lérida Civil Governor (February 1940); *Arxiu Històric de Lleida*, Govern Civil, Orden Público, Box 613, Folder 20. Cited in Calvet, *Huyendo del Holocausto*, 48.
119 Arthur C. Frost, US Consul-General in Barcelona, 'Rumored Plans for Expulsion of Jews' (8 February 1941); NARA, RG-59, Box 5534.

months at the concentration camp at Miranda de Ebro.[120] The surgeon Hermann Grünbaum spent more than two years in Spanish gaols in Madrid and Barcelona, as well as at Miranda de Ebro.[121] The artist and architect Peter Kainer, on the other hand, was interned in the Miranda camp in September 1940, and extradited to Germany in August 1941. After enduring torture and several years of forced labour, Kainer was deported to the east and never returned.[122]

While their husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons were interned at Miranda de Ebro, their wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters, as well as the youngest males in the family, also endured persecution at the hands of the Spanish police. Women of Polish, Russian, and Czech origin were also called to regularise their residence status in Madrid, and were sent to the Women's Prison in Barcelona, where they spent months and even years sleeping on damp concrete floors.[123] Some German Jewish women from the Mallorca colony — particularly those whose husbands were on the run from the Gestapo— were allowed to remain in freedom for as long as their funds held out, after which they were also sent to prison. Meanwhile, they endured constant inquisition from the Spanish and German police, who demanded details about their husbands' whereabouts. In words of Clara Isaacsen, a Jewish refugee from Hamburg who had found refuge in Barcelona:

> 'Since the victory of General Franco in Spain [1939] began our persecution by the Gestapo. We had domiciliary visits by the police and were bereaved of our

[120] Siegfried Goldenkranz, his wife Alice (née Weitzen), and their daugther Margrit had migrated to Mallorca in November 1933, where they survived on the money he made giving violin lessons, while the two women raised ducks and grew vegetables. Siegfried was arrested on 17 June, and was only released from Miranda de Ebro on 29 March 1943 thanks to the efforts of RSARO. After several failed attempts to migrate, the family managed to sail to the US in September 1946; USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 4992, Siegfried Goldenkranz.

[121] Hermann Grünbaum fled Hitler's Germany in 1933 and established a small dental practice in Mallorca. He was released by RSARO in April 1943, and reached the US aboard the SS *Serpa Pinto* on 16 October 1943; In USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 4990, Hermann Gruenbaum.

[122] Peter Kainer's AFSC file states that he was evacuated from Berlin to Bromberg (Bydgoszcz) in 1944. By April 1946, neither his wife nor his mother knew of his whereabouts. USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 5262, Peter Kainer.

[123] Dina A. Moore-Bowden, AFSC volunteer relief worker, to Mary Rogers, AFSC Refugee Section, Philadelphia (7 October 1940); in USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 3505, Klepper Family.

> German nationality. On July 1st, 1940 we were expelled from Spain and threatened with [internment in a] concentration camp if not leaving Spain. We succeeded in postponing this order [un]til the end of last February [1941], but on February 24th [1941] I was arrested and [put] in prison [un]til the day of our departure from Spain'.[124]

Owing to German wishes, German 'Aryan' women in 'mixed' (*mischling*) marriages whose Jewish husbands were in prison were offered to return to Germany if they renounced to their Jewish husbands and pledged to raise their children as 'Aryans'.[125] This was the case of Eva Maria and her sixteen-year-old son Hans, whose husband and father, Alfred Kauffmann, was interned in Miranda de Ebro for most of the war.[126] Other cases of 'Aryan' wives who were pressed to desert their Jewish husbands at Miranda and return to Germany include Irene Maison, married to the architect Hans Maison; and Alice (née Weitzen) Goldenkranz, wife of the aforementioned Siegfried Goldenkranz.[127]

In addition to collaborating in the persecution of foreign Jewish refugees, Francoist authorities also took steps to register all Jews living under Franco's jurisdiction into the so-called '*Archivo Judaico*' ('Judaic Archive'). On 5 May 1941, the Count of Mayalde, acting in his capacity as chief of the DGS, distributed amongst all Civil Governors an order requesting detailed reports of all Jews —whether of Spanish or foreign nationality— living in each Spanish province. Amongst other aspects they were asked to report on the following: personal details, political affiliation, means of subsistence, commercial

[124] Leopold, Clara, and their daughter Ruth migrated to Spain in 1934. Leopold, worked for a company that exported and imported minerals and chemicals. Their daughter worked as a secretary and foreign correspondent. The Isaacsens sailed from Lisbon aboard the SS *Serpa Pinto* on 16 May 1944, bound for Philadelphia. The testimony is translated in original, and dated 12 March 1942; USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 8151, Isaacsen Family.

[125] Moore-Bowden, Sintra's Hotel Central, to AFSC Lisbon (12 October 1941); in USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 4990, Hermann Gruenbaum.

[126] The Kauffmann family only reunited in early 1944 thanks to the efforts of RSARO, and sailed to Canada in March 1944 aboard the SS *Serpa Pinto*; in USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 4991, Alfred Kauffmann. The *Serpa Pinto*'s manifest with the details of their sailing can be found in AGA, AMAE, R-2179-43-348 (available in USHMM, RG-36.001M).

[127] In reference to Irene and Hans Maison, see report dated 6 March 1941; in USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 4990, Hermann Gruenbaum. For Alice (née Weitzen) Goldenkranz, see USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 4992, Sigfried Goldenkranz.

activities, 'degree of dangerousness', personality, and all sects, trade unions, and parties to which they belong. Moreover, the document also emphasised the need to pay special attention to Sephardic Jews living in Spain, since 'owing to their capacity to adapt to their environment and their similar temperament to ours, are more likely to conceal their origins and even go unnoticed, without it being possible to restrict the extent of their disturbing manipulations'.[128] The extent to which the *Archivo Judaico* served the Franco regime to persecute Jews is difficult to estimate on the basis of the material currently available in Spanish archives. Rather than centralised in a single collection, its case files are mixed with thousands of other non-Jewish cases handled by the DGS. Furthermore, the fact that most of the files stamped with the *Archivo Judaico* logo contain no information suggests that Francoist authorities may have emptied the documents in an attempt to destroy evidence of collaboration in the Holocaust.[129]

Spanish authorities also proved very cooperative in the extradition of Jewish refugees from Spain, in fact, as the case of Carl and Aline Furtmüller demonstrates, more cooperative than it was required of them. The Viennese pedagogue and psychologist Prof Carl Furtmüller, of Jewish origin, was one of the founders of the Austrian *Schulreform*, a pedagogical movement based in the principles of Alfred Adler's individual psychology. Carl's wife, Dr Aline Furtmüller, was a social-democrat politician and French linguist of Russian origin. They both fled to Spain in 1940 thanks to the efforts of Fry's CAS.

[128] Circular No. 11 of the DGS (5 May 1941); *Archivo Histórico Nacional* (henceforth AHN), AH-36145. Reproduced in Jacobo Israel Garzón, 'El Archivo Judaico del Franquismo', *Raíces* 33 (1997), 57-60. Since Garzón first wrote about Circular No. 11, a number of unsubstantiated claims have been made around this document. The most widespread is that of the Spanish journalist Jorge M. Reverte, who speculated without any evidence that the *Archivo Judaico* allowed the Franco regime to elaborate a census of the 6,000 Jews who lived in Spain. According to Reverte, a 'list' with all those names would have been given to Hitler as a 'gift' — thus explaining the figure of 6,000 Jews in Spain that feature in the minutes of the Wannsee Conference of 20 January 1942— allegedly, to prepare the ground for their deportation to the gas chambers in the event that Spanish had entered the war. In Jorge M. Reverte, 'La Lista de Franco para el Holocausto', *El País* (20 junio 2010).

[129] Some of the DGS case files that are stamped 'Archivo Judaico', can be found at AGA, DGS, Box 10630, No. 946312, Hans Wilde; Box 9022, No. 204681, Flora Ascher Hassid; Box 9022, No. 204676, Samuel Alberto Ascher Hassid; Box 10664, No. 85, Moisés Benveniste Covo; Box 10908, No. 24, Ángel Isaac Gattegno; Box 10908, No. 25, Alberto Gattegno; Box 10908, No. 28, Alberto Cohen Hassan; Box 10747, No. 90, Elías Serfaty Roffe; and Box 10524, No. 381456, Yudah Levy Bendahán.

Although they had crossed the border legally —they had US visas, French exit visas, and Spanish transit visas— they were arrested by Spanish authorities because they thought that the Gestapo 'would be interested in these refugees'. But this was not the case. When the Spanish police handed them over to the Germans they showed no interest in the couple. After being robbed of their money and belongings by the Spanish police, Carl was interned at Miranda de Ebro, and Aline was sent to prison in Figueras (Lérida) despite the fact that she was severely ill with Leukemia. After several months of confinement, the couple was released thanks to the efforts of the USC Lisbon office, and arrived in New York in March 1941. As cancer was taking her life, Alina wrote: 'it takes all my store of patience, courage, and moral strength to put up with this state of being out of life, aside it, just when I came here to get in it'. Alina died in December 1941.[130]

Ernst Scheuer and Rosi Moses-Scheuer, on the other hand, managed to reach Spain clandestinely after suffering internment at the Gurs camp. Upon arrival to Spain, they were arrested and imprisoned separately for five months. On 15 February 1941, they were taken by Gestapo officials to Hendaye, in Germany-occupied France and were later discharged for an unknown reason. Thanks to the efforts of Fry's CAS, they managed to arrange all necessary documentation and flee for a second time to Spain, just in time to sail to New York aboard the SS *Navemar* in early August 1941.[131] On 30 July 1941, the sub-director of the branch of *Crédit Lyonnais* in Barcelona Louis Hayem, received from the DGS an order to abandon Spain within a month. As the French Consul-General pointed out in a letter to the French Ambassador to Spain, Hayem's Jewish origin was the only possible reason for such expulsion, as the French banker was never involved in political activities and was highly reputed within the French colony of Barcelona for his community and charity work. Despite Pietri's appeals to the DGS, Hayem was expelled to France and sailed

[130] USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 5399, Prof Dr Carl Leopold and Dr Aline Furtmüller.
[131] See testimony of Rosi Moses-Scheuer; LBI, AR-25281, Box 2, Folder 3, 38-39. See also USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education (henceforth VHA), No. 25985, Interview with Rose Scheuer.

to the US from Lisbon at the end of October 1941.[132] Ernesto Levi, a shopkeeper born in Frankfurt, was imprisoned in Vigo (Prisión del Partido) on 31 October 1942, the same month that Spain theoretically transitioned towards 'neutrality'. His penitentiary file leaves no doubt as to the nature of the arrest, 'crime: unknown (religion: Jewish)'.[133]

Franco's Spain was not only hostile to Jewish refugees. As Spain prepared to enter the war during the fall of 1940, the Spanish police did not make any distinction between races or nationalities. In September 1940, Hoare reported that 'British subjects are being arrested without any reason' and given 'expulsion orders at a moment's notice'.[134] Likewise, there were instances in which foreign nationals were arrested simply because they had called on the British Consulate in Barcelona.[135] In October 1940, James McDonald noted how the Gestapo had 'taken over control of the Spanish police in certain key cities' and gave the example of Zaragoza, where the local police had disobeyed the Spanish Foreign Minister's order to release Ignacy Paderewski, head of the Polish parliament-in-exile, in order to satisfy German demands. After much insistence from the Spanish government and McDonald himself, Paderewski was permitted to continue to Lisbon.[136]

The extent of Spanish antisemitism can also be seen through the case of Tangier. Upon the Spanish occupation of Tangier on 14 June 1940, Francoist authorities deemed the Jewish Community's council illegal through the abrogation of the Ẓahīr of 15 February 1925. The rabbinic tribunal and its constitutions were equally dissolved, and the Jewish community lost all subsidies and its right to elect communal leaders, who thereafter would be appointed by Spanish authorities from among the candidates presented by the

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[132] See Louis Hayem to René Casteran, French Consul-General in Barcelona (1 August 1941); and Casteran to François Pietri, French Ambassador in Madrid (3 August 1941); CADN, 396-PO/C1/465.
[133] AGA, TP-8-14-1250-R, Ernesto Levi. My translation.
[134] Hoare to Halifax (16 September 1940); Cambridge University Library, Department of Manuscripts,
Lord Templewood Papers (henceforth Templewood Papers), XIII:20(52).
[135] Eychenne, *Les Portes de la Liberté*, 133.
[136] See James McDonald to Sulzberger (10 October 1940). Cited in Breitman, et al., *Refugees and Rescue,* 220.

community.[137] Arrests ensued. In July, the Spanish police arrested a Syrian Jew of French nationality, Malik, on the ground that he was a spy. Malik was extradited to French Morocco where he faced forced labour at the Missour camp, but owing to the beatings he had received, the French deemed him 'inapt' for work and transferred him to the refugee camp in Sidi-el-Ayachi.[138] But the persecution of the Jews of Tangier was not limited to the earlier months of the war. On the contrary, the Allied amphibious invasion of French North Africa in November 1942 led to a new wave of antisemitic violence in the formerly-international enclave. In the last days of 1942 and beginning of 1943, the Spanish police raided the synagogue during religious services, raided many Jewish homes, and arrested 55 Jews who were accused of 'communist activities' without any such evidence. At the end of May 1943, more than 200 Jewish and Arab youths who had registered at the French consulate for labour service in French Morocco were rounded up by the Spanish police and flogged. Thirty of them were deported to Tetouan. The British Consul-General in Tangier, Sir Alvary Gascoigne, immediately protested to Spanish military governor, General Jenaro Uriarte, who promised an investigation. On June 3, the governor informed the representatives of the Jewish community that the boys would be 'pardoned'.[139] Although Spanish authorities later admitted that the only reason for their punishment was that the youths had chosen to volunteer for the Allies and not for Axis, the British Consul-General had a slightly different version of the facts:

> 'In January, and again in May 1943, the Spanish authorities, acting, no doubt, under pressure form the local Axis representatives, carried out numerous arrests of Jews. The arrests executed in May were on a large scale. Ostensibly, they were carried out for the alleged reason that these young Moroccan Jews had enlisted in the French forces by enrolling themselves at the French Consulate-General. This enrolment, the Spaniards argued, was contrary to the neutral status of the

[137] Michael M. Laskier, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century: The Jews of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 70-1.
[138] Johnson, Head of Refugee Section, to Benatar, Casablanca (28 January 1944); USHMM, RG-67.008M, Series I, Box 7, Folder 189.
[139] Martha Jelenko, 'Spain', *American Jewish Year Book* 45 (1943-1944), 294-297.

> Tangier zone. The arrest, which amounted to some 250 in all, were carried out with the callous brutality which is so typical of the Spaniard. It was later proved that the vast majority of the Jewish youths arrested had taken no steps whatsoever to enrol themselves in the French forces, and it became clear that the action of the Spanish authorities had been carried out mainly for the purpose of persecuting allied sympathisers and Jews'.[140]

Whilst local Jews were persecuted, European refugees were not welcome either. Prior to Spanish occupation, the US Consul estimated the number of refuges in Tangier at 3,000 —mainly Jews— of whom 1,000 managed to migrate shortly after. Following the Spanish takeover, however, no refugees were allowed to enter Tangier, nor Spanish Morocco. The border was strictly controlled, and intruders faced internment in forced labour camps in the region. Refugees already in Tangier were barely tolerated, some were expelled.[141]

At the beginning of 1943, Spanish authorities threatened Rose Stern and other four Hungarian Jews with deportation to a concentration camp in Spain unless they could obtain a visa and leave for a third country. It was only through the action of the British Consul-General in Tangier, that Spanish authorities dropped the charges against these refugees.[142] But in June 1943, Gascoigne informed that the 'German-paid Spanish police' had issued expulsion orders again to Hungarian and Polish Jews. When approached to counteract this order, High Commissioner in Spanish Morocco General Luis Orgaz stated that this concession to the Germans was of small importance, as he was countering more important German demands.[143] Thanks to funds provided by JDC, the Jewish Community of Tangier established a small refugee committee that fed 250 refugees daily, paid the rent for families in need, and maintained four large

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[140] Sir Alvary Gascoigne, British Consul-General in Tangier, Memorandum to FO (27 September 1944); Hayes Papers, Box 3, Folder 'Spain: General History, 1944'.
[141] Charles B. Elbrick, US Consul in Tangier, to Cordell Hull, US Secretary of State (7 March 1944); FDRL, Papers of the War Refugee Board (henceforth WRB), Part II, Reel 4, Folder 23.
[142] See Anthony Zsilinszky, The Association of Hungarians in Great Britain, to Frank Roberts, FO (26 January 1943); and US Consulate-General in Tangier, to FO's Refugee Department (16 March 1943); both in TNA, FO-371/36631/W1693.
[143] Gascoigne to FO (10 June 1943); TNA, FO-371/36639/W8731.

apartments to lodge homeless refugees.[144] By November 1942, the Jewish Community provided financial assistance to 400 of the 800-1,000 German, Austrian, Polish, and Czech refugees who remained in Tangier, and assisted them with food, lodging, and medical aid.[145]

Unlike Spain, Portugal was much less vulnerable to Nazi pressure regarding the persecution of racial and political refugees, and did not even allow the Wehrmacht or the SS men to walk the streets of Lisbon in uniform. In the absence of a formal police agreement with the German police, the Portuguese PVDE cooperation informally. There are at least three documented cases of PVDE agents who were on German payroll and who received special 'training' from the Gestapo. With his reputedly brutal methods, PVDE agent José Correia de Almeida turned over a number of German Jewish refugees and Gaullist agents to the Germans. One of his victims was the Jewish pacifist Berthold Jacob, who reached Lisbon in 1941 thanks to Varian Fry's organisation.[146] Jacob was kidnapped as he returned to his hotel from visiting the USC office in Lisbon, handed over to the Spanish police, and extradited to Berlin, where he died after three years of torture and starvation at the hands of the Gestapo.[147] Besides Jacob's case, however, there is no other known instance of Jewish refugees being handed over to the Germans by Portugal. In strict observance of its duties as a neutral, any extradition request from the German Embassy in Lisbon was always met with a negative response from the MNE. Moreover, when the RSHA queried the German consulate in Lisbon regarding the possibility of requesting from the Salazar government the halt to Jewish emigration from Portugal, as well as the extradition of the Jews who were still there, Consul Hollberg responded:

> 'The Portuguese government, which acts according to humanitarian principles, would never restrict Jews, whichever their nationality, from emigrating to countries overseas. It would be futile to request from this government the

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[144] 'Memorandum regarding European refugees in the Tangier area' (6 August 1942); USHMM, RG-67.008M, Series I, Box 1, Folder 18.
[145] 'General Situation of the Jews in North Africa' (13 November 1942); JDC, Reel 1, Folder 434.
[146] As reported by Wheeler, 'In the Service of Order', 11-12.
[147] Isenberg, A Hero of Our Own, 194-6.

> extradition of Jews from Germany or German-occupied territories. In the same way, it would be futile to attempt the repatriation of the Jews presently in Portugal by means of the existing connections between the two [Portuguese and German] police.'.[148]

The treatment accorded to Jewish refugees in Portugal was relatively more humane than the one they received in neighbouring Spain. In principle, the Salazarist regime avoided at all cost the establishment of foreigners on their soil —whether Jewish or not— and attempted to force their emigration whenever possible. In some instances, the PVDE even forced Portuguese shipping companies to include refugees whose visas were about to expire in their first outgoing sailing —some saw this with positive eyes.[149] Those who were left stranded in Portugal due to the expiration of their visas, the lack of transportation, or simply due to the fact that no country overseas was willing to take them in, were permitted to live in forced residences at the expense of Jewish organisations. Similarly, refugees who succeeded in entering Portugal clandestinely were —after a short period of arrest— allowed to legalise their status and placed in forced residence. There were several towns that served as forced residence for refugees: Coimbra, Peniche, Praia das Maças, Costa da Caparica, and Curia each hosted small groups of refugees, but the two most populous were two coastal towns near Lisbon: Caldas da Rainha and Ericeira.[150] Jewish refugees in forced residence could not work or leave the town without authorisation from the PVDE, but were free to move and to choose their residence within its limits. They elected their own representatives to voice the needs of the refugee community, and the police listened to their needs. Refugee children were allowed to attend school provided that a relief agency covered their tuition fees. Religious activities were permitted in two small

[148] German Consulate in Lisbon to RSHA (8 September 1942); *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts* (PA AA), Paket 198, Lissabon, 163/3 'Juden in Portugal auch Einbürgerung'. Cited in Schaefer, *Portugal e os Refugiados Judeus*, 225-6. My translation.
[149] Augusto D'Esaguy, president of COMASSIS, 'Report on the First Quarter of 1941' (undated); JDC, Reel 66, Folder 897.
[150] By September 1942, 480 out of 650 Jewish refugees in Portugal were concentrated in Caldas de Rainha. Charles R. Joy, 'Report of Activities in Europe, USC 1941-1942' (14 September 1942); USC, bMS-347/49(7).

synagogues opened to such end in Ericeira and Caldas. Recreational and vocational group activities were permitted after **HERE** approval from the PVDE.[151] For the refugees in forced residence, the main problem was one of 'forced inactivity', as relief organisations struggled to help them become self-sufficient.[152] Some refugees engaged in irregular work, whether teaching languages, manufacturing clothes, or selling food and other goods to the rest of refugees. Refugees were still obliged to renew their residence permits every thirty days, but these permits were always granted by the PVDE.[153] In April 1942, Charles R. Joy, head of the USC office in Lisbon summarised his views on their conditions in forced residence like this:

> 'Their life at Caldas da Rainha is very interesting and revealing. Almost all of them spend their entire day in the little square, either in the cafés drinking coffee and swapping rumors or walking around the square … The country round about is beautiful; it is a pleasure resort for the Portuguese; but the refugees never leave the center of the town. While they get excited about the rumors, many of them are quite content with life at Caldas da Rainha … Some of them are living better than they ever lived before … Recent letters have come back from Cuba expressing regret on the part of the writers that they ever left Caldas, and saying that life in Portugal was very much more comfortable than their present life in Cuba. In our own work I have had to take very drastic measures with a few families to force them out of Portugal when they simply did not want to go'.[154]

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[151] Schwartz, JDC Lisbon, 'Portugal and the Refugee Problem' (14 February 1944); JDC, Reel 66, Folder 897.
[152] Conard, 'Mid-December Report, Lisbon office' (20 December 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, numbered #600-680 (29 August-31 December 1943)'.
[153] Pimentel and Ninhos, *Salazar, Portugal, e o Holocausto*, 485-7.
[154] Joy to Dexter (14 April 1942); USC, bMS-347/49(31).

The Organisation of Relief in Franco's Spain

Throughout the war, the Franco regime refused to allow any foreign relief agency to operate on Spanish soil and was hostile to foreign relief workers. If they were Jewish, this was even more the case. The expulsion of the British Quakers Alfred and Norma Jacobs is an illustrative example of this attitude. The Jacobs were representatives in Spain of the Friends Relief Service (FRS), the relief arm of London's Religious Society of Friends. Since 1928, they had led the FRS office in Barcelona (*Servicio Internacional de los Amigos Cuáqueros*) and worked in several areas of relief. During the Spanish Civil War, they established children's colonies away from the cities to protect Spanish children from air raids and the war.[155] But the fact that civil war caught them in Republican Spain meant that they were immediately suspicious from the point of view of the Francoists. On 7 August 1940, Alfred Jacobs —and by extension also his wife— received their expulsion order from the Barcelona chief of police. Their internal police file states: 'it has not been possible to ascertain the kind of political activities in which this individual has been involved during the period of Marxist domination [republican territory during the Spanish Civil War] but, in view of his Jewish background, it appears that he was a great supporter of the Marxist cause'.[156] The Jacobs left the same month of August, and the Barcelona office of the FRS was closed for good. Considering the fact that the British Quakers had been actively offering relief to both sides of the civil war, this example elicits the lack of sense of humanitarianism and concern for the plight of refugees in Francoist Spain.

Ironically, the Spanish government was quick to request foreign relief assistance in the late summer of 1940, when a disastrously bad harvest aggravated the already delicate national situation that resulted from nearly three years of civil war.[157] From September 1940, the Spanish government

[155] Daniel Maul, 'The Politics of Neutrality: the American Friends Service Committee and the Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939', *European Review of History* 23:1-2 (2016): 82-100.
[156] See 'Nota informativa de la DGS' (8 November 1940); in AGA, DGS, Box 10747, No. 42, Alfred Jacobs. Translation is mine.
[157] J. A. Cross, *Sir Samuel Hoare: A Political Biography* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1977), 336.

expressed its desire to obtain foodstuffs and other commodities from the USA to meet the serious shortage in Spain. The US State Department saw this as an opportunity to promote good relations with the most moderate elements within Franco's government in an attempt to secure Spanish neutrality. One key point of contact in the negotiations was Franco's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Colonel Juan Luís Beigbeder, who was most anxious to keep Spain out of the conflict. On 17 October 1940, however, Beigbeder was replaced by Serrano Súñer at the MAE, who had just returned from Berlin and Rome precisely to draw Spain closer to the Axis. Due to the little prospect of influencing the Spanish government, the US State Department considered that the basis which had justified offering emergency assistance to Spain through the shipment of foodstuffs no longer existed. But the British disagreed with the view of the Americans. On 8 December, the British Embassy in Madrid submitted a memorandum to the US ambassador which indicated that London was very keen to offer the Spanish government large quantities of wheat from its own stocks in Argentina and Canada, and urged the US government to do the same. On 16 December, US ambassador to Spain, Alexander W. Weddell, sent a statement to President Roosevelt: 'In view of British insistence in the matter we have now reconsidered our position'. Three days later, the White House gave green light to the project.[158]

The distribution of wheat, flour, milk, vitamin supplements, and medical supplies to Spain, was to be carried out by the American Red Cross (ARC). The ARC relief programme for Spain began in early 1941 and ended with the Spanish harvest of 1941. This agreement with the Spanish government was reached on four conditions: that no wheat or flour be exported during that period; that the Anglo-American relief initiative be publicised within Spain; that Spanish authorities prioritise those in most need and do not charge for these services; and that the distribution of relief supplies within Spain was supervised by the ARC in cooperation with the Spanish Red Cross (SRC).[159]

[158] Alexander W. Weddell, US Ambassador in Madrid, to US DS (23 December 1940); NARA, RG-59, Box 5244.
[159] 'Notes on Conversation with Col. Crockett, Director of the ARC in Spain' (19 September 1941); AFSC, Box 3, Folder 'Portugal: Lisbon, letters, and cables to'.

When the ARC special commission arrived in Madrid at the end of January 1941, however, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ramón Serrano Súñer, did not stand by his word: the distribution of relief supplies in Spain was to be supervised by *Auxilio Social* ('Social Aid') and not by the ARC.[160] *Auxilio Social* was the largest relief organisation in Franco's Spain, and since it was administered by Falange's Women's Section (*Sección Femenina*), it fell within the jurisdiction of the leader of Falange, Serrano Súñer.[161] By the time the ARC commission left Spain in the Autumn, the Franco regime had received very generous very donations. The SS *Cold Harbor* brought to Spain 4,500 tons of wheat flour, 250 tons of powdered milk, 250 tons of condensed milk, and 30 trucks for distribution of relief. The SS *Capulín* transported more than 10,000 tons of foodstuffs and medical supplies. The SS *Navemar* brought 3,000 tons of foodstuffs, and 171 crates of medicines. The SS *Motormar* carried 425 tons of wheat flour, and 50 tons of soap. Finally, the SS *Artigas* brought 300 tons of flour.[162]

Despite the generous Anglo-American donation to Spain, *Auxilio Social* adopted an arrogant and intransigent position in regards to the distribution of ARC relief supplies within Spain. Despite grave charges of mismanagement and misappropriation of funds by high officials within the Falange-run organisation, *Auxilio Social* remained adamant that it was able to meet all relief needs in all parts of Spain, and refused cooperation from the Americans.[163] Philip A. Conard, in charge of the AFSC office in Lisbon, described it like this:

[160] Weddell to Hull (7 February 1941); NARA, RG-59, Box 5244.
[161] *Auxilio Social* only acquired that name after the Unification Decree of 1937. When it was first established in October 1936, it had been named *Auxilio de Invierno* ('Winter Relief') after the Nazis' *Winterhilfswerk*, upon which it was modelled. See Markus Höffer-Mehlmer, *Modernisierung und Sozialarbeit in Spanien* (Bremen: Europäischer Hochschulverlag, 2009), 62-5.
[162] See Ernest J. Swift, ARC Vice-Chairman, to Hull (17 January 1941); and Weddell to Hull (21 March 1941); NARA, RG-59, Box 5244.
[163] Alexander W. Weddell, US Ambassador in Madrid, to US DS (22 January 1940); NARA, RG-59, Box 5243.

> 'They say they have all the facts about every family and every person, such as nobody else has or can have; that they know with certainty where help is needed and how much; that if anybody wants to help intelligently, the way to do it is to turn over to the "Auxilio Social" the means and materials for such help and it will be distributed where it will do the most good'.[164]

The conditions in which *Auxilio Social* distributed relief were hardly driven by humanitarian principles, and conditional on strict adherence to the practice of Catholicism and to the tenets of Falange. Yet, for many parents, this was the only way to feed their children in post-civil war Spain.[165] The least fortunate children were those who, in addition to having lost their parents during the war, grew up in the sinister 'children's homes' (*hogares*) administered by *Auxilio Social*. In addition to being forced to pray upon waking up and before going to bed, and before and after every meal; they were also required to sing the Falange anthem daily and were effectively subject to military discipline.[166] Moreover, if their carers knew —or suspected— that these were orphans of Spanish Republican parents, their experience was even more terrifying:

> 'Some of the nuns had lost their brothers, uncles, or fathers. Some fell victims to bombings, others died at the hands of Republicans, "the damned Reds!" as they said. And for these poor women we were also damned Reds. At the slightest provocation we were pinched, beaten, and punished long hours with our knees on the ground. There was constant hysterical screaming around us. We didn't know how to defend ourselves. We breathed an air of resentment around us, and that rancour scared us because we couldn't do anything to nullify it. We knew we were guilty, but we didn't know what we had done wrong. When the classes ended —which consisted exclusively of reading the lives of saints— they

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[164] Conard, 'A Long Week-End in Spain; Report of a Visit to Madrid' (19-28 July 1941); AFSC, Box 3, Folder 'Portugal: Lisbon, letters and cables to'.

[165] On the work of *Auxilio Social*, see the works by Ángela Cenarro Lagunas, *La Sonrisa de Falange: Auxilio Social en la Guerra Civil y en la Posguerra* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2006), and *Los Niños del Auxilio Social* (Madrid: Espasa, 2009).

[166] See for instance Encarnación Barranquero Texeira, and Lucía Prieto Borrego, *Así Sobrevivimos al Hambre: Estrategias de Supervivencia de las Mujeres en la Posguerra Española* (Málaga: Diputación de Málaga, 2003); and Francisco Ferreira, *El hambre y las Desgracias de Auxilio Social en la Dictadura de Franco: Abandonados por la Justicia* (Madrid: CLV Libros, 2017).

would stand us up, and we would sing the *Cara al Sol* [Falange's anthem] with our arms extended'.[167]

In such unwelcoming environment, Jewish organisations struggled to offer relief to Jewish refugees in Spain. In most parts of Europe, JDC had been able to do so by funding local Jewish communities, many of which were already engaged in relief activities of their own. But in Franco's Spain this was not possible. Jews were barely tolerated, and any Jewish association was quickly suppressed by the government. Dr Wertheimer, for example, who was the former president of the Jewish Community of Berlin as well as naturalised Spaniard, was only allowed to remain in Spain thanks to the intervention of an influential Spanish friend and the promise to abstain from all collaboration with Jewish institutions in Spain in the future.[168] This attitude, combined with the Francoist refusal to authorise any foreign relief agency on Spanish soil, proved a true nightmare for relief workers and refugees alike. In fact, the only way in which private relief organisations managed to circumvent these obstacles successfully was by seeking the protection of the Allied diplomatic missions in Spain, and especially of the US Embassy in Madrid.

The first person to defy the Spanish chauvinistic attitudes to relief was the wife of the US Ambassador to Spain, Virginia C. S. Weddell, whom Sir Samuel Hoare described as 'the soul of human kindness'.[169] In October 1940, several months before the beginning of its official relief programme for Spain, the ARC sent $5,000 to Virginia Weddell for the purchase of food and medical supplies, and requested that she form a local relief committee in cooperation with the SRC. Weddell accepted the proposal, and formed a committee together with other Embassy staff and the SRC.[170] Soon, Weddell began to fund her own relief activities, and to receive further donations from AFSC — initially, for value of $1000. Within weeks, ARC showed satisfaction with Weddell's

[167] Testimony of Francisca Aguirre. Cited in Eduardo Pons Prades, 'Los Niños Republicanos en la Guerra de España', *Deportate, Esuli, Profughe* 3 (2005), 165. My translation.
[168] See JDC report, 'The Situation of the Refugees in Spain' (24 October 1940); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 914.
[169] Hoare, *Ambassador on Special Mission*, 23.
[170] Amongst the members of the relief committee was Princess Anna of Schwarzenberg, who as secretary of the International Council of Nurses (ICN) had been engaged in relief activities during the Spanish Civil War. See Ernest J. Swift, ARC Vice-Chairman, to Ambassador Weddell, Madrid (25 October 1940); Virginia Historical Society Archives (henceforth Weddell Papers), Mss-1-W-4126-b-FA-2, Box 53.

work: 'she is doing a good job and will competently administer whatever resources can be placed at her disposal'.[171] She visited military hospitals and distributed clothing to the wounded, distributed vaccines and medicines, and set up a small orphanage with a group of American women to take care of homeless children of the civil war —later turned over to *Auxilio Social*. Once she had gained the favour of Spanish authorities, Weddell began directing her efforts towards hundreds of refugees who had fled Nazi terror and now populated prisons and camps across Spain.[172]

In February 1941, Joseph Schwartz, head of the JDC office in Lisbon, heard about Virginia Weddell's relief activities. Immediately, the JDC began to subsidise her committee with $500 per month. With these funds, Weddell brought food and clothing amongst Jewish internees at Miranda, distributed cash grants to their wives and children on the outside, and assisted their migration whenever possible. That same month of February, Weddell managed to successfully release Jewish refugees from Miranda for the first time —the father and son of the Gans family— and arrange their emigration to Argentina.[173] Emma Ratin, a Russian Jewish refugee who had been expelled from Mallorca, offered herself as a volunteer, and began to administer the US Embassy's Jewish relief service.[174] During 1941, as migration from the Peninsula became increasingly difficult —due, for instance, to the new US visa requirements— the Jewish refugee situation in Spain also became more acute. In view of the growing number of refugees in need, the JDC increased its monthly contribution from $500 to $1,000 in November, and to $1,500 from

[171] L. M. Mitchell, ARC Assistant Director, to Ray Atherton, US SD, Division of European Affairs (12 November 1941); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.
[172] Mrs Weddell to Sumner Welles, Under Secretary of State, Washington (31 March 1942); Weddell Papers, Mss-1-W-4126-b-FA-2, Box 53.
[173] Amongst the women helped by the JDC through this method we know of Selma Oppenheimer, Juana Curibl, Irene Maison, Berta Behar Jacob, Pilar Scheinberger, Natividad Echenbaum, and Francisca Zimmermann. In Report, 'Various Charities' (28 February 1942); Weddell Papers, Mss-1-W-4126-b-FA-2, Box 53.
[174] A librarian by training, Emma Ratin had fled twice: as a 'white' Russian, she fled to Weimar Germany during the Bolshevik Revolution; and as a Jewish Russian, she fled again to Mallorca following Hitler's rise to power in 1933. At the beginning of 1941, she was expelled from Mallorca, and barely managed to survive in Madrid thanks to her savings. Owing to her Russian origins, her migration from Spain was extremely difficult to achieve. Ratin, who had no friends or relatives in the capital, chose to volunteer for the US Embassy helping others. See USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 17382, Emma Ratin; and report dated 6 March 1941; in USHMM, AFSC Case File No. 4990, Hermann Gruenbaum.

December 1941.[175] Virginia Weddell's relief activities in Spain were so impressive relative to the size of her small team, that Serrano Súñer himself praised her as Washington's 'second ambassador' to Spain.[176]

Partnership between JDC and Virginia Weddell's relief committee continued through June 1942, when it was suddenly discontinued. Back in March 1942, Washington had forbidden all US citizens from communicating with enemy countries, Axis-occupied countries, or persons formerly nationals of 'enemy' countries. Upon receiving such news, Mrs Weddell consulted with the US State Department, whose ambiguous response sufficed to allow the continuation of her relief activities as long as these remained independent from the US Embassy. Although technically against US Government censorship regulations, the Embassy's relief work was transferred to the hands of Dorsey 'Zora' Stephens, Weddell's right-hand on relief matters, and wife of Lieutenant-Colonel Stephens, Military Attaché at the US Embassy in Madrid. After consultation with JDC New York, Joseph Schwartz gave green light in behalf of JDC.[177] Unfortunately, the frail health of US Ambassador Alexander Weddell meant that he had to be relieved from his post in Madrid in the late spring. On 16 May 1942, the new US ambassador to Spain, Carlton J. H. Hayes, landed in Madrid. It did not take Hayes very long to raise his objections regarding Dorsey Stephens' relief activities. In Hayes' view, and rightly so, the arrangement achieved between Mrs Weddell and Mrs Stephens still violated the ruling of their government that no US citizen should communicate with enemy nationals or persons formerly members of enemy nationality. Concerned with damaging the already delicate diplomatic relations between the US and the Franco government, Hayes ordered the immediate cessation of such relief activities, as well as the Embassy's partnership with the JDC. Indeed, the ambassador was right. Virginia Weddell's relief committee was not

[175] Miss Medina, US Embassy in Madrid, 'The Refugee Problem in Spain' (21 April 1942); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 914. For a detailed financial account of Weddell's relief activities, see 'Mrs Weddell's Private Relief Fund, 1940-1942' [ca. February 1942]; Weddell Papers, Mss-1-W-4126-b-FA-2, Box 34.

[176] Ramón Serrano Súñer, *Entre les Pyrénées et Gibraltar: Notes et Réflexions sur la Politique Espagnole depuis 1936* (Geneva: Éditions du Cheval Ailé, 1947), 236.

[177] Dorsey Stephens, US Embassy in Madrid, to Schwartz, JDC Lisbon (27 April 1942); Weddell Papers, Mss-1-W-4126-b-FA-2, Box 34.

seen sympathetically by the Franco regime, which had so far tolerated her relief activities because of her official status, and despite their view that all charitable initiatives would be better administer by *Auxilio Social*.[178]

In a letter to Joseph Schwartz, Hayes clarified that his decision to terminate the Embassy's work with Jewish refugees had been motivated entirely by his desire to adhere to the policy of the US State Department. Furthermore, the ambassador confessed to be aware the plight of the refugees, and promised Schwartz: 'I wish to do everything in my power to aid you and the JDC'.[179] Indeed, in parallel to serving as Professor of European History at Columbia University for many years, Hayes was also Catholic co-chairman at the interfaith National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ), and was considered 'one of the most liberal of prominent American Catholics'.[180] Since the JDC had already transferred the funds for the month of June, Hayes allowed Dorsey Stephens to continue distributing relief during the month of June 1942, and suggested that the JDC should find somebody to replace her thereafter who was neither an US citizen nor connected to the US Embassy.

The person who took over Stephens' activities was a Spanish woman named Luisa, who continued to distribute JDC funds to a 'Jewish list' of about 250 Miranda internees through September 1942. In doing so, Stephens and Schwartz also disobeyed the ambassador's ruling. Each month, Schwartz would set aside 1,000 Portuguese escudos for Stephens, who would then reimburse Luisa with an equivalent amount in pesetas. As such, this arrangement was 'strictly under the hat', and was not known to Ambassador Hayes. For lying to the ambassador, Stephens said she felt obliged to confess every week —'which is very frequent for a liberal Catholic like me'.[181] Ultimately, Schwartz admitted the truth to Hayes during a visit to Madrid in

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[178] See Stephens' letters to Schwartz, JDC Lisbon (30 May 1942); and to Mrs Weddell, Richmond VA (1 June 1942); Weddell Papers, Mss-1-W-4126-b-FA-2, Box 34.
[179] Hayes, US Embassy in Madrid, to Schwartz, JDC Lisbon (2 June 1942); Weddell Papers, Mss-1-W-4126-b-FA-2, Box 34.
[180] Ironically, Hayes had written his PhD research at Columbia University on Germanic invasions of the Roman Empire. See Schauffler, AFSC Philadelphia, to Conard, AFSC Lisbon (16 April 1942); AFSC, Box 4, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, R-series #213 to #309, Incomplete (16 March-31 July 1942)'.
[181] Stephens to Mrs Weddell (5 September 1942); Weddell Papers, Mss-1-W-4126-b-FA-2, Box 34.

December 1942. Despite not being welcoming to the truth at first, the ambassador acknowledged the desperate situation of Jewish refugees, and took it upon himself to establish a permanent relief office in Spain.[182]

Meanwhile, the JDC had also exploited other avenues to offer relief to Jewish refugees in Franco's Spain. Since the beginning of 1941, JDC cooperated with Fred Max Oberländer, a Jewish merchant in the fountain pen business who had a shop in Barcelona. There is little we know about this man, other that he had been sent by Vienna's Orthodox Jewish community —the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde* (IKG)— and that he looked after Jewish refugees in Barcelona and Miranda thanks to funds from JDC. But his situation was precarious, and he felt obliged to migrate in September 1941.[183]

That same month, the JDC found a better solution. Since Portuguese citizens were allowed to work in Spain owing to reciprocal labour provisions between the Franco and the Salazar regimes, Schwartz convinced Dr Samuel Sequerra, of the Lisbon Jewish Community, to work as the unofficial JDC representative in Barcelona. Evidently, they had to find a cover to circumvent the Francoist aversion to foreign relief agencies. Officially, Sequerra travelled to Barcelona in quality of representative of the Portuguese Red Cross (PRC), and discreetly began his work as JDC representative. Given the undercover nature of this arrangement, Sequerra's initial activities in behalf of the JDC were humble in scope. Since the JDC was not authorised to distribute funds directly to refugees in Spain, the British Consulate in Barcelona acted as an intermediary: they would distribute funds amongst refugees in need —either towards migration or assistance— and the JDC would reimburse them for the expenses.[184]

Initially, Sequerra's JDC 'office' was based at Barcelona's Hotel Bristol, very close to the US, the British, and French —but also the German— consulates. Despite its modest beginnings, Sequerra's organisation grew

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[182] Stephens to Mrs Weddell (24 December 1942); Weddell Papers, Mss-1-W-4126-b-FA-2, Box 34.
[183] Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust,* 45-55.
[184] Sequerra, 'Memorandum on the situation in Spain' (ca. 2 October 1942); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 914.

rapidly, and soon counted twelve staff members working from eight hotel rooms.[185] In Madrid, where there was no official JDC representation, Sequerra liaised with Moshe Eisen, a Polish Jewish refugee aged twenty-one who earned his living as doorman to Madrid's Hotel Mediodía a refugee-laden hotel opposite Madrid's main train station of Atocha. Eisen's task was to look after JDC cases in the capital —providing lodging and money allowances— and to report to Sequerra on these activities. The young Moshe did all of this from the hotel lobby, and thus faced great risk. With the increased refugee influx of late 1942, Eisen was not able to deal with the number of help-seeking refugees —often more than 100 at a time— and Sequerra began to look for a more organised solution. It was then that Maurice Kranz, another refugee, offered to lease two rooms at Hotel Medíodia and established the JDC 'office' in Madrid. Kranz continued to care for JDC cases in the Madrid region, and provided refugees with migration advice. Despite having Sequerra's authorisation to do so, Kranz's bureau in Madrid was not sanctioned by neither of the JDC offices in New York or in Lisbon, which evinces the fragile position of the JDC —otherwise the most powerful Jewish relief agency— in Francoist Spain.[186]

In addition to the contrasting level of organisation, another major difference between the work of the JDC in Portugal and Spain concerns police attitudes towards relief organisations. The Spanish police barely tolerated the JDC's work in Spain, and found numerous ways of troubling Sequerra's work. They questioned Sequerra about certain refugees, extorted fines from his organisation, and physically threatened his own staff. Early in August 1942, the police assaulted and vandalised Sequerra's office at Hotel Bristol, and arrested one of his assistants. A few weeks after this event, Sequerra wrote still in shock:

> 'The Spanish police is controlled by the Gestapo. In spite of the fact that they know of the humanitarian work that we do, they do not stop torturing us. During the month of August they took away all our files and papers and

[185] 'Rapport sur l'Activité à Barcelone de l'American Joint Distribution Committee en 1944' (undated); JDC, Reel 70, Folder 919.
[186] Maurice Kranz fled to Perpignan following the fall France, from whence he helped refugees cross into Spain. He crossed the Pyrenees in September 1942. See Kranz to Leavitt (25 March 1944); and Leavitt to Kranz (28 March 1944); JDC, Reel 70, Folder 917.

returned them only after almost a month, and then only a part … The Jewish organisations in Portugal are simply admitted to function, and we are barely tolerated'.[187]

With the onset of the deportations from France during the summer of 1942, the refugee crisis in Spain intensified. By virtue of new immigration rules, Vichy suspended the issuance of new exit visas to Jews, and all exit permits already issued to Jews had to be reconfirmed by Vichy's authorities —this last measure did not apply to Jews of French, Belgian, and Dutch nationality.[188] Consequently, many Jewish refugees were forced to cross the Franco-Spanish border illegally, and Spanish authorities reacted by reinforcing border surveillance, thus compromising Sequerra's work:

> 'On the one hand the refugees ask us to save them, on the other the Spanish police demands of us that we give them the names of those who seek our help. If we so denounced them, they would be immediately arrested. I have, naturally, refused to accede to this demand'.[189]

Possibly the most tragic side to this story is the fact that, despite the attitude of Francoist authorities, there were many foreign relief workers desirous to assist refugees in Franco's Spain who were barred from doing so for no compelling reason. From their Lisbon office, AFSC had been trying to offer relief to Jewish refugees in Spain throughout 1941.[190] In February 1942, they even donated an important sum of money to Madrid's *Casa de las Mercedes*, were orphans of army officials were cared for, in an attempt 'to grease the palms of Spanish officials'.[191] The Unitarians also tried to send an USC representative to Spain to offer relief to refugees in prison or unable to migrate.[192] But to no avail.

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187 Sequerra, 'Memorandum on the situation in Spain' (ca. 2 October 1942); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 914.
188 Schwartz, JDC Lisbon, to JDC New York (11 August 1942); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 914.
189 Sequerra, 'Memorandum on the situation in Spain' (ca. 2 October 1942); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 914.
190 Conard, 'A Long Week-End in Spain; Report of a Visit to Madrid' (19-28 July 1941); AFSC, Box 3, Folder 3.
191 Conard, 'Notes on a Visit to Spain' (10 August 1942); AFSC, Box 4, Folder 6.
192 Dexter to Hooper (23 Sept 41); Dexter papers, Box 1, folder 14.

Lisbon: Europe's Refugee Capital

In sharp contrast with Franco's Spain, where neither Jews nor foreign relief organisations were welcome, Lisbon proved to be one of Europe's main refugee and relief hubs. This owes both to its political and geographical situation in relation to the rest of the continent. On the one hand, Lisbon was the European capital least touched by the conflict, and enjoyed relatively normal life and tranquility away from the horrors of war.[193] On the other hand, the Portuguese capital had also privileged access to the Atlantic Ocean and was one of the busiest ports for wartime Europe. In Koestler's rhetoric: 'Lisbon was the bottleneck of Europe, the last open gate of a concentration camp extending over the greater part of the Continent's surface'.[194] In this context, some of the most active private agencies in Europe —AFSC, JDC, HICEM, and USC— moved their European headquarters to the Portuguese capital within the first months of war.[195] In regards to Jewish relief and rescue, the presence of an important Lisbon Jewish Community —not in size, but in deed— proved decisive for Lisbon's success. Owing to its good relations with Portuguese officials, for instance, the Jewish Community of Lisbon was able to obtain concessions from the Salazar regime regarding the treatment of Jewish refugees, bargain with Portuguese shipping companies, and support the work of foreign relief organisations operating from the capital.

The Lisbon Jewish Community comprised about 400 Sephardic Jews who constituted the nucleus of the city's Jewish life before the war, and an additional 500 Ashkenazi Jews who migrated from Poland during the 1920s, and from Germany since 1933. The majority of Sephardim worked in the liberal professions, with some very wealthy merchants amongst them. By contrast, Lisbon's Ashkenazim worked mainly as tradesmen and peddlers, or in the

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[193] See for instance Conard, 'Brief report on the Lisbon office of the AFSC, May to August 1941' (23 August 1941); AFSC, Box 3, Folder 'Portugal: Lisbon, letters and cables to'.
[194] Koestler, *Scum of the Earth*, 244.
[195] The most obvious exception to this list were the World Jewish Congress (WJC), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which although present in Lisbon, had their European headquarters in neutral Geneva.

manufacture of knitted and leather goods. This disparity in economic status explains why there were very few Ashkenazi Jews in the community's executive committee, which was dominated by the Sephardim.[196] The Community was presided by Moisés Bensabat Amzalak, a polemic personality, above all due to his close friendship with Salazar, whom he befriended during their college years at the University of Coimbra. Amzalak was both a published economics scholar, and a public figure engaged in political activity. In his role as academic, he was professor at Lisbon's Technical University, as well as dean of the Institute of Higher Economic Studies since 1931. In regard to his public activity, he was co-director of *O Século*, one of the main daily newspapers in Portugal.[197] In addition to his leadership position within the Lisbon Jewish community, Amzalak also cultivated friendship with non-Jews amongst the Portuguese elite, the most notable being, of course, the dictator himself. As a conservative and anti-Republican, Amzalak was a loyal supported of Salazar's authoritarian regime.[198] In an interview he gave for the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* on 28 July 1978, the Jewish community leader attributed Salazar's sympathy for the refugees to his friendship with the dictator.[199] Contemporary accounts, however, depict Amzalak as a self-centred personality with narcissistic tendencies. As seen by James H. Mann, Assistant Executive Director of the War Refugee Board (WRB), Amzalak 'hadn't the slightest interest in rescuing Jews from occupied territory'. Rabbi Disendruck, a linguist who also worked towards the relief activities of Lisbon's Jewish community, described its president as 'a man who was not interested in either religious or welfare work, but was interested only in adding to the prestige of Amzalak'.[200]

The relief branch of the Lisbon Jewish Community was the *Comissão*

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[196] See Isaac Weissman's Address at the WJC's War Emergency Conference in Atlantic City (27 November 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 27, File 4.
[197] Milgram, *Portugal, Salazar, and the Jews*, 34-37
[198] Some scholars have pointed towards Amzalak's personal connections with Nazi diplomatic representatives in Portugal, and criticised the fact that as co-director of *O Século*, he allowed for the publication of several pieces of Nazi propaganda. See António Louçã, *Conspiradores e Traficantes. Portugal no Tráfico de Armas e Divisas not Anos do Nazismo. 1933-1945* (Lisbon: Oficina do Livro, 2005), 60-65.
[199] Cited in Pimentel, *Judeus em Portugal*, 205-6
[200] Both Disendruck and Mann are cited in 'Report of James H. Mann on Trip to Portugal and Spain' (30 August 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 28, File 6.

Portuguesa de Assistência aos Judeus Refugiados ('Portuguese Relief Committee for Jewish Refugees'), and had its main offices at Rua Rosa Araújo 35. COMASSIS, for short, was established upon the initiative of Professor Adolfo Benarus in early 1933 to assist the first refugees from Nazism. Benarus' prestige amongst both Jews and non-Jews helped advance the committee's causes.[201] With the increased influx of refugees that ensued the *Anschluss* of 1938, Benarus' advanced age —he had turned 75 that year— forced him to step down as president of COMASSIS. The man who to took over his role was Dr Augusto d'Esaguy, who had been the committee's Secretary-General since its foundation in 1933, and continued as COMASSIS' president through 1945. A published physician, Dr d'Esaguy had developed a great interest in Ashkenazic culture, the languages of Eastern European Jews, and was a fervent supporter of the Zionist cause. Although operating on a small budget, COMASSIS provided European refugees with medical and psychological care, and voiced their needs with the Portuguese government and the PVDE in relation, for instance, to the issuance of residence and work permits. Additionally, COMASSIS also ran a community kitchen at 21 Travessa do Noronha, not far from its main offices.

Following the fall of France in June 1940, COMASSIS became overwhelmed with the number of Jewish refugees seeking assistance. In less than four weeks, the committee's monthly budget rose from $400, to $10,000.[202] To face the wave of refugees fleeing France, COMASSIS hired additional staff to provide extra accommodation, and more than two hundred daily meals at its community kitchen. Likewise, the increased budget meant that the Lisbon committee became almost entirely dependent on funds from JDC and HICEM. With these funds, COMASSIS was able to renovate its public kitchen and provide a basic living allowance to refugees. During the summer of 1940, COMASSIS struggled to convince the PVDE to grant transit

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[201] As president of the *Federação Sionista Portuguesa*, Professor Adolfo Benarus was one of the most prominent Portuguese Zionist and was in touch with Jewish leaders such as Chaim Weizmann and WJC-founder Nahum Goldman. See Milgram, 'Portugal, the Consuls and the Jewish Refugees', 374(n20).

[202] Augusto D'Esaguy, Chairman of COMASSIS, address delivered at the JDC Luncheon (4 June 1941); JDC, Reel 66, Folder 896.

permits to Jews stranded above the Pyrenees, and negotiated the release of Jews detained at seaports, airports, and the Spanish-Portuguese border. COMASSIS also acted on behalf of the Luxembourgish Jews whom the Germans deported from Luxembourg aboard the *Zwangstransporte*. Thanks to d'Esaguy's intervention, two of these groups were released from detention and made their way into Portugal in late 1940. They were allowed to stay in Lisbon until the could arrange their migration overseas. In parallel to these activities, COMASSIS also established a mission in the city of Porto in cooperation with its local Jewish community. The mission was headed by Hans Warmbrunn, a refugee from Frankfurt who had made a living in Porto representing chemical and metal firms. When refugees began to pour into Porto, Warmbrunn distributed relief funds amongst refugees, arranged travel permits with the PVDE to allow them to reach the port of Lisbon, and provided with the liturgical needs of Hasidic Jews, amongst other initiatives.[203]

During the summer of 1940, JDC and HICEM, the two main Jewish organisations offering relief and migration assistance to Jewish refugees in Europe, were forced relocate their European headquarters from Paris to Lisbon. From the Portuguese capital, d'Esaguy lobbied the authorities to recognise HICEM and JDC, and to allow them to operate in Portugal. Additionally, COMASSIS also provided the infrastructure for their rescue activities. Joseph J. Schwartz, the JDC's European director, moved to Lisbon on 14 June 1940. Schwartz opened offices at 242 Rua Áurea, in the middle of the commercial and banking district, and within walking distance from COMASSIS' main office. It would be impossible to list here the number of relief activities which the JDC office coordinated from Lisbon. Possibly one of its earliest and most tangible achievements relates to the 'transmigration' of Jewish refuges from the Reich. From late 1940, JDC and COMASSIS acted as a liaison for thousands of refugees who migrated from Nazi-occupied territories in sealed trains that connected Berlin with the Port of Lisbon. Transports arrived regularly with more than 50 persons each, usually a day or two before their sailing was due. Upon arrival, the staff of COMASSIS and JDC accommodated refugees in

[203] Milgram, *Portugal, Salazar, and the Jews*, 128-38.

hotels and boarding-houses; stored their luggage; checked the validity of their visas; helped them take the medical examination; and acted with shipping companies and the PVDE on their behalf. Within the first three months of 1941, 1,603 Jewish refugees passed through Lisbon in this way.[204] Another important achievement of Schwartz's JDC office was to persuade shipping companies to include Casablanca in their routes between Lisbon and the Western Hemisphere, thus permitting thousands of stranded refugees there to be evacuated.[205] Similarly, with the toughening of US visa requirements during the summer of 1941, Schwartz sought for alternative routes to Brazil and Argentine. Later that year, he also persuaded the CCN, in charge of the SS *Serpa Pinto*, to make a special stop in Santo Domingo so that refugees did not need a Cuban transit visa in order to go to the Dominican Republic.[206]

The German invasion of Belgium on 10 May 1940 forced HICEM to close down its offices in Brussels and Paris, and to look for a new centre of operations. As the emblematic leader of the Belgian Jewish Community, Max Gottschalk, put it: 'This place for the time being can only be Lisbon'.[207] Although the bulk of its European activities were directed from Lisbon, HICEM also opened two branch offices in Marseille (425 Rue Paradis) and Algiers (2 Impasse Bresnier). The Marseille office, however, was dissolved on 29 November 1941 by virtue of the same French law that established UGIF. In Lisbon, Dr James Bernstein and Ilya Dijour headed the HICEM office at 12 Rua Braamcamp, just two blocks away from COMASSIS' headquarters and in the vicinity of the US and the Spanish consulates. HICEM's main contribution was to assist the emigration of refugees, not just from the Iberian Peninsula, but from unoccupied France as well. This included, amongst other tasks, the promotion of visa applications with officials of potential host countries, and the search for friends and relatives of emigration candidates in those countries to

[204] Augusto D'Esaguy, Chairman of Comassis, 'Report on the First Quarter of 1941 (undated); JDC, Reel 66, Folder 897.
[205] Dr. Judah J. Shapiro, 'Memorandum on JDC activities in North Africa' (23 October 1944); JDC, Reel 1, Folder 434.
[206] Leavitt, 'Memorandum for the members of the Emigration Committee' (2 October 1941); JDC, Reel 79, Folder 365.
[207] Max Gottschalk to James Bernstein, HICEM Lisbon (7 January 1941); YIVO, RG-245.4; Series I, File XII, MKM-15.33.

maximise their chances of admission. If refugees had no economic means or relatives who could assist them financially, HICEM also covered the costs of their migration.

One of the first non-Jewish committees to settle in Lisbon was the USC. The relief activities of the American Unitarian Association (AUA) began in early 1939, when the Unitarians joined forces with the AFSC to send a relief commission to Czechoslovakia. This mission was headed by Rev. Waitstill H. Sharp and Martha Sharp. The Sharps had planned to open USC's headquarters on French soil, but in view of the German invasion they opted for Lisbon instead. Waitstill Sharp spend most of the summer of 1940 setting the Lisbon office of the USC in motion. As it was already common practice, he chose to establish the USC office at 103 Rua Rodrigo da Fonseca, in the proximity to the other relief committees.[208] Martha Sharp, on the other hand, worked primarily from the USC office in Marseille, and in late 1940, organised USCOM's first Jewish children convoy from unoccupied France. Besides their work with children refugees, one distinguishing feature of the Unitarians is that they prioritised the rescue of —as USC founder Robert C. Dexter put it— 'worthwhile' cases.[209] Owing to their philosophy, the Unitarians became Varian Fry's closest partners. From their Lisbon office, they directed hundreds of intellectuals through the Iberian Peninsula towards the Western Hemisphere. In words of Charles R. Joy, who took over the USC office in Lisbon in September 1940:

> 'Few people, therefore, realize the magnitude and the significance of that river of life. It was not made up of ordinary people. It was composed of the leaders in art, science, literature, and politics. It was our self-appointed task to help those whose gifts of heart and mind could be ill spared by the world. We were making channels for a mighty river of culture that flowed out of Europe to the West'.[210]

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[208] In November 1941, USC moved its Lisbon office to 15 Rua Castilho, even closer to COMASSIS and the other relief agencies.

[209] Dexter to Hooper (1 September 1941); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 14.

[210] Joy, 'For the Future in the Distance: the Unitarian Service Committee in World War II'

In addition to rescuing Europe's most reputed intellectuals, the Unitarians were also invested in saving the leadership of democratic Europe. In contrast to the law-abiding Jewish relief committees and the pacifist and pro-neutrality approach of the Quakers, the Unitarians were vigorous supporters of the Allied cause and were ready to risk the displeasure of the governments of Vichy, Madrid, and Lisbon.[211] As summarised by Elizabeth A. Dexter, the USC was 'positively not neutral, and were glad to run the risk'.[212] For this reason, it became common practice for the other relief committees in Lisbon to hand over to the USC the cases of political refugees: pacifists, anti-fascist activists, Spanish Republicans, democrat leaders, and others on the Nazis' 'black list'. In return, HICEM handled a good deal of the transportation arrangements for USC protégés, who often shared sailings with the JDC and AFSC cases. Additionally, USC Lisbon also organised an extensive package service that sent small parcels of food from to Spain and France, and acted as agent in Lisbon for several other organisations, including the International Migration Service (IMS), and the International Rescue and Relief Committee (IRRC).[213]

The next major relief organisation to move to Lisbon were the Quakers of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). Although unofficially, AFSC relief activities in the Peninsula began months before the official establishment of the AFSC office in Lisbon, in May 1941. The volunteer who first distributed relief in behalf of the AFSC was Dina A. Moore-Bowden, a well-to-do California-born English lady who had been resident of Mallorca years before the war and was fluent in English, German, French, and Spanish. Moore-Bowden was well known to the refugee community in Mallorca, as she ran a recreation and activities centre for children of the island's international colony.[214] On 22 June 1940, one of her friends wrote to her in despair that their

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[1945]; USC, bMS-16004/1(1).

[211] Dexter to Hooper (1 September 1941); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 14.

[212] Elizabeth A. Dexter, *Last Port to Freedom* (Unpublished draft, [1943]), 14a; Dexter Papers, Box 2, File 4.

[213] The full list of bodies represented through the USC Lisbon office includes the Central Bureau for Relief of the Evangelical Churches of Europe; the World Alliance for Friendship through the Churches; the American Association of University Women; the Kosciuszko Foundation; and the American Friends of Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, respectively. See 'The Second Mile, May 1941-May 1942'; USC, bMS-16004/1(1)

[214] Marjorie P. Schauffler, of the AFSC Refugee Section, described Moore-Bowden as a woman of 'great beauty and charm, established social position and poise, and [with] excellent contacts among the foreign colony [in Mallorca]'. Schauffler, Hotel Borges, Lisbon, to AFSC

male Jewish friends in Mallorca had been 'taken away from their homes' to the camp at Miranda de Ebro.[215] The letter came from Erna Klepper, a Protestant refugee from Germany and mother of three who was also being harassed by the Gestapo.[216] For some time, Moore-Bowden managed to provide aid —from her own money— to Erna and other refugee families in Mallorca, who had been left in freedom until their savings ran out. Soon, demand for help increased, and Moore-Bowden felt obliged to request assistance from two relief organisations: the FRS, represented by Alfred Jacobs in Barcelona; and —through Virginia Weddell's relief committee in Madrid— the JDC office in Lisbon. After the expulsion of Alfred and Norma Jacobs in early August 1940, the Jacobs referred Moore-Bowden to the American Quakers in Philadelphia, and the AFSC began funding her relief work in the Peninsula. Moore-Bowden, who refused to leave for the US in view of the situation of her friends in Mallorca, moved to Lisbon to continue her relief activities. From Philadelphia, the staff of AFSC proved most cooperative, and even signed affidavits to support the emigration to the US of some of the refugee families in Mallorca.

In view of the great demand for relief, AFSC sent Marjorie Page Schauffler, of AFSC's Refugee Section, to study the refugee situation in the Iberian Peninsula. Schauffler arrived in Lisbon on 7 February 1941, and remained there for six weeks during which she made contacts and paved the way for the formal opening of the AFSC office. In addition, Schauffler also looked for potential children candidates for the USCOM programme in Lisbon.

Philadelphia (12 March 1941); AFSC, Box 3, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from 79 to 182 (6 October-31 December 1941)'.

[215] See Erna Klepper to Dina A. Moore-Bowden (22 June 1940); in USHMM, AFSC Case Files, No. 3505, Klepper Family. Most information on Moore-Bowden's activities is also here.

[216] The Klepper family had five members: Otto Klepper, Trudy (née Eickhoff) Klepper, and their three children, Ingrid, Renate, and Otto. Otto Klepper (father) had been Secretary of State and Minister of Finance during the two cabinets preceding the Hitler regime (1931-2). Otto fled to France in 1933, while the rest of the Klepper family found asylum in Mallorca. From his Parisian exile, he founded the *Deutsche Freiheitspartei* (DFP) in 1937, a small opposition party aimed at raising opposition against the Nazis. With the fall of France in 1940, Otto went into hiding in a farm in Southern France. Erna Klepper and their three children were constantly harassed by agents of the Gestapo, who pressured them to reveal the whereabouts of their husband and father. Erna and the children sailed from Lisbon on 9 September 1941 bound for New York, aboard the SS *Nyassa*. On the *Deutsche Freiheitspartei*, see Beatrix W. Bouvier, *Die Deutsche Freiheitspartei (DFP): ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Opposition gegen den Nationalsozialismus* (University of Frankfurt: PhD Thesis, 1972).

Upon quitting Lisbon, Schauffler had left two of her collaborators temporarily in charge of AFSC activities: Dina A. Moore-Bowden, and Lise Lindbaek, a Norwegian citizen also engaged in relief activities.[217] Philip A. Conard, the official AFSC representative, arrived on 11 May 1941 to begin the official work of AFSC in Lisbon. Conard had just retired from the YMCA's international committee after 35 years as delegate in South America, in fact, he sailed to Lisbon from Montevideo. Initially, Conard, Moore-Bowden, and Lindbaek worked from Lisbon's Hotel Borges, blocks away from the JDC office. Every morning, refugees lined up in the hotel corridor outside their rooms, and were interviewed at the rate of 50 to 60 per day. Progressively, they hired more hotel rooms and personnel to deal with the demand for assistance. Once it became too expensive, they began looking for a long-term solution. On 27 June 1941, they moved from Hotel Borges to the new AFSC office at 7 Rua Dom Pedro V.[218]

Unlike the Unitarians, the Quakers did not emphasise the productivity and achievements of the refugees they assisted. Rather, AFSC prioritised refugees in greatest need, whatever their status, and particularly those who were not eligible for assistance from any of the other committees. They helped legalise the status of undocumented refugees who had been imprisoned by the PVDE, and provided them with financial support and emigration assistance. In this sense, the Quakers developed good rapport with the PVDE, and in particular with the head of prisons, Captain Gaspar de Oliveira, and the head

[217] Lise Lindbaek (Copenhagen, 1 January 1905) studied archaeology, Greek, and Latin in Oslo. During the 1920s, she worked for five years as secretary to Roal Amundsen as he prepared for his North Pole expedition. Simultaneously, she also worked as a journalist on liberal newspapers. She married and had a child, Janka, in 1929. After 1933, she engaged in antifascist activities in various countries to the point that Norwegian fascists deemed her their 'public enemy No. 1'. In 1936, she was war correspondent during the Spanish Civil War. Later she gave several lectures about the Spanish war in Scandinavia and collected large amounts of money for the Spanish Republic. She spoke English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, as well as Scandinavian languages. Following Franco's victory, she volunteered with the Swedish women's committee for aid to Spanish refugee children in France. After the fall of France, she helped many refugees escape. Lindbaek came to Lisbon by way of Casablanca —where she also helped refugees migrate— in late 1940, and partnered with Dina Moore-Bowden to assist refugees in the Iberian Peninsula. On 30 June 1941, Lise Lindbaek sailed to New York on the SS *Excalibur*. See USHMM, AFSC Case Files, No. 5843, Elise Aubert Lindbaek.

[218] Conard, 'Brief report on the Lisbon office of the AFSC, May to August 1941' (23 August 1941); AFSC, Box 3, Folder 'Portugal: Lisbon, letters and cables to'.

of the visa division, Captain João Amado.[219] They also cooperated with JDC in arranging the transportation of the children convoys evacuated from France by USCOM. This included looking after them from the moment they crossed the Franco-Spanish border until they embarked from Lisbon. They purchased food for child-feeding programmes in France, and cooperated in the distribution of ARC food and medical supplies to Franco's Spain. AFSC also effected money transfers from relatives in the US, Canada, and South American countries, for refugees stranded in Portugal. Lastly, the AFSC office in Lisbon also provided financial assistance to 'transmigrants' from Germany, who reached Portugal with a mere 10 RM ($4) each, and thus could not pay for their expenses while in Lisbon nor for the expensive transatlantic passages. Maintenance would be given for a few days or weeks until they could embark. At times, one single expired document would leave refugees stranded for years.[220]

The AFSC office in Lisbon also assisted the emigration of refugees referred to them by AFSC delegates across Europe. Since ship bookings were essential to obtain transit visas for Portugal, and these in turn to obtain transit visas for Spain, AFSC would book shipping passages in their behalf and thus break that bureaucratic vicious circle. Given that shipping companies used to sell all places available months ahead of the actual sailing, almost every ship left Lisbon with some empty spaces due to frequent last-minute cancellations. Hence, AFSC was often able to get tickets at the eleventh hour. From the official opening of the AFSC Lisbon office in May until the end of 1941, AFSC assisted the emigration of 150 Jewish refugees —who represented a third of their total casework. During 1942, AFSC Lisbon assisted sent a total of 83 Jewish persons —from 260 migration cases. These are small figures when compared to the thousands who migrated thanks to the efforts of the Jewish organisations, but their work was nonetheless crucial considering that those

[219] Conard, 'Refugee Service Work of the [AFSC] Lisbon Office' (6 November 1944); Conard Papers, Box 1.
[220] See Conard's report-speech presented to the AFSC Committee during February-April 1943, 'Human Tragedy of the European Refugee'; AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, numbered #456-599 (2 January-26 August 1943)'.

were some of the most entrenched cases whom the other relief committees were unable to assist for one or another reason.[221]

Without doubt, the Lisbon relief committees would not have been able to act efficiently without mutual cooperation. All Lisbon-based committees benefited greatly from the excellent information bulletins prepared by the National Refugee Service (NRS). These included reports and statistical studies including factual information about US immigration laws, new government regulations, the refugee situation internationally, and any other information that might impact the lives of refugees and the work of those helping them.[222] Every four to six weeks, all relief organisations in Lisbon held a conference to discuss common problems and plans for cooperation. Often, cases would pass from one committee to another if they thought this benefited refugees. Sometimes, relief agencies would need to reinforce the financial assistance given to a particular refugee family. But it was in regards to transnational migration that cooperation proved most crucial. Fry's CAS, for instance, relied heavily on the Lisbon offices of HICEM and USC. Without these two committees, Fry's initiative would not have been able to achieve the emigration of their 1,500 protégés. As recounted by Elizabeth Dexter:

> 'There was no hard and fast division among the Jewish agencies, the Quakers, and the Unitarians, about what cases each one would handle, and our clients changed too rapidly to make a confidential exchange feasible. We reduced overlapping to a minimum, however, by keeping in close personal touch. In some cases which more than one agency helped, there was a division of effort,

[221] See Richie, AFSC Lisbon, to Rogers, AFSC Philadelphia (24 March 1942); and Howard Wriggins, AFSC Lisbon, to Rogers, AFSC Philadelphia (20 July 1942); both in AFSC, Box 4, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, #184 to #455 (3 January-31 December 1942)'. See also Johnson, AFSC Lisbon, to Rogers (11 January 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, numbered #456-599 (2 January-26 August 1943)'.

[222] The National Refugee Service (NRS) was an US refugee aid organisation established in New York City on 15 May 1939, to assist refugees fleeing Nazi persecution. The NRS was based on its predecessor, the National Coordination Committee for Aid to Refugees and Emigrants Coming from Germany (NCC), which had been operative since June 1934. The NRS offered legal assistance during the immigration process, vocational guidance and job placements services in the US, and offered special assistance to refugees from specific professional backgrounds (e.g. musicians, rabbis, physicians). See Sharon Lowenstein, 'The National Refugee Service (NRS)', in Michael N. Dobkowski (ed.), *Jewish American Volunteer Organizations* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986), 364-72.

and we came to know what each agency could do best'.[223]

There are numerous cases in which relief agencies surmounted obstacles imposed by the context of war and government bureaucracies. Following the entry of the US in the war in December 1941, the JDC and HICEM had to reorganise themselves in order to remain operative in neutral Portugal, as relief funds could no longer be made available to US accounts without special US Treasury licence. Under the initiative of its leader Moisés Amzalak, the Lisbon Jewish Community created its Refugee Relief Department, the *Secção de Assistência aos Refugiados da Comunidade Israelita de Lisboa*. This was a proxy organisation that allowed JDC and HICEM to make deposits in the Community's account, and thus continue their work under the protection of the Lisbon Jewish Community. Thanks to this arrangement, both HICEM and JDC were able to continue their previous work with refugees.[224]

Likewise, relief agencies were also able to optimise their work through cooperation with other non-profit organisations, as well as with government officials. At the beginning of 1942, there were two issues related to transportation that hindered the issuance of US visas to refugees in Europe. The first problem was the lack of space on boats, which made the US State Department more conservative regarding the granting of visas. The second issue was the need for faster communications between the US and South-Western Europe over possibilities of transportation. In view of the war emergency, the cable censor wished to reduce the number of communications being sent abroad, and suggested centralising all cables regarding visa applications and possibilities of transportation at the JDC's European headquarters in Lisbon. Thus, from February 1942, the Lisbon office of the JDC channelled all transatlantic communication regarding the advisory approval of US visas and sailings in behalf of the other relief organisations

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[223] Elizabeth A. Dexter, *Last Port to Freedom* (Unpublished draft, [1943]), 85; in Dexter Papers, Box 2, File 4.
[224] [Bernstein], 'Report on the HIAS-ICA Activities in Lisbon (18 December 1941); YIVO, RG-245.4, Series I, File XII, MKM-15.30, A-2.

operating in the region.[225] The only exception was HICEM, which handled a considerable number of migration cases, and continued to send cables of its own. By virtue of this arrangement, each of the partnering agencies would prepare their own immigration cases and send the final application information to the JDC office in Lisbon, which would update the agency in question on transportation opportunities and visa decisions from Washington. If the US Visa Section's response was positive, JDC Lisbon would then refer the decision both to the relief agency in question, and to the US consulate concerned. This agreement proved extremely practical for the refugees, for the US State Department, as well as for the steamship lines, which now had greater financial guarantees that their ships would be booked in full and with less cancellations. By the same token, this solution also spared the JDC from taking too many financial risks with shipping companies, by booking passages for visa applicants before Washington gave their definitive approval.[226]

[225] Amongst the agencies that agreed to cooperate with the JDC in this manner were the American Committee for Christian Refugees (ACCR), the AFSC, the Catholic Committee for Refugees (CCR), the HIAS, the IMS, the IRRC, the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), the NRS, the American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs (AECZA), the Jewish Labor Committee (JLC), the WJC, and the PAC. See Memorandum (21 March 1942); JDC, Reel 79, Folder 364.

[226] Memorandum (21 March 1942); JDC, Reel 79, Folder 364.

Chapter Four:

The Allied Response, 1943-44

Franco's Spain: The Stumbling Block

On 8 November 1942, the Anglo-American Allies launched the first offensive operation of World War II, thus opening a second front in the West Mediterranean. Vowing to bring the torch of freedom to French North Africa, 'Operation Torch' consisted of a series of simultaneous amphibious attacks on five separate beaches of French Morocco (Safi, Fedhala, and Port Lyautey) and Algeria (Oran, and Algiers). Although not as decisively as the Allies had desired, this operation was successful in its three main goals: to relieve pressure from the Soviet front by opening a second front, to drive the Axis forces out of North Africa, and to bring France back into the Allied camp.[1] First, while Axis forces directed their attention at Tunisia, the Soviet launched a massive counteroffensive ('Operation Uranus') of pivotal importance for the Battle of Stalingrad. Second, following the Axis surrendered in Tunisia on 13 May 1943, North Africa came under Allied control. Third, and despite initial resistance, the French gradually became more active in the Allied war effort and challenged the legitimacy of the Vichy regime through the creation, on 3 June, of the *Comité Français de Libération Nationale* (CFLN). As Churchill aptly put it: 'this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning'.[2]

Three days after the beginning of the Allied military landings in North Africa, the Axis powers retaliated by occupying Vichy France ('Case Anton'): while the Italians seized the island of Corsica and the French riviera until the river Rhone, the Germans took over the rest of France. In words of Jewish scholar Mark Wischnitzer, it was 'as if a death-trap had snapped shut on the Jews of Europe'.[3] Unlike Vichy France thus far, German occupiers were keen

[1] On the consequences of the 'Operation Torch', see for instance George F. Howe, *Northwest Africa: Seizing the Initiative in the West* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1957); and more recently, Vincent P. O'Hara, *Torch: North Africa, and the Allied Path to Victory* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2015).
[2] Winston S. Churchill, 'The End of the Beginning. A Speech at the Lord Mayor's Day Luncheon at the Mansion House, 10 November 1942', cited in his *The End of the Beginning: War Speeches* (Boston: Little, 1943), 266.
[3] Wischnitzer, *To Dwell in Safety*, 245.

to stop a new wave of youths (e.g. disbanded French soldiers, Allied PoWs, and pilots) from escaping across the Franco-Spanish border. To prevent as many of them from joining the Allied war effort in North Africa, frontier surveillance increased dramatically. In addition to the French *Gendarmerie*, the Germans deployed about 2,000 men alongside the 500km frontier between France and Spain, including frontier patrols with trained dogs (*Grenzschutz*), specialised alpine corps from Bavaria and the Austrian Tyrol (*Gebirgsjäger*), and the Wehrmacht's armed police (*Feldgendarmerie*).[4] By agreement between German and Spanish authorities, any person found within 25km of the Pyrenees without a special safe conduct would be immediately arrested.[5]

Against this background, the role of the Iberian Peninsula in the Jewish refugee crisis shifted dramatically. Since the French government was now a puppet regime under German command, Vichy stopped issuing exit visas to persons leaving France. This left thousands of stateless refugees and PoWs with no other alternative than to cross the Pyrenees into Spain illegally, whilst the transit of Jewish refugees through Portugal diminished dramatically. By late December, the British ambassador to Spain, Sir Samuel Hoare, warned the British FO that 'hundreds arrive every day'.[6] In the early days of 1943, the AFSC delegate in Lisbon, Philip Conard, reported that refugees arrived in Spain at a rate of 80 to 100 daily, and further advised: 'We must reorient our thinking and turn our thought to Spain'.[7] By the the late spring of 1943, the Catalan prisons in Lerida, Gerona, and Figueras, in north-west Spain, were still overcrowded with two to three times their nominal capacity.[8] Both Joseph Schwartz, of the JDC, and Sir Herbert Emerson, High Commissioner for Refugees, estimated at 5,000 the number of Jewish refugees who reached Spain by December 1942.[9] Naturally, this meant that demand for relief in Spain also

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[4] Émilienne Eychenne, *Les Pyrénées de la Liberté: 1939-1945: Le Franchissement Clandestin des Pyrénées pendant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (Paris: Éditions France-Empire, 1983), 119-21.
[5] Calvet, *Las Montañas de la Libertad*, 31.
[6] Hoare to FO (19 December 1942); TNA, FO-371/32700.
[7] Conard to Rogers (8 January 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, numbered #456-599 (2 January-26 August 1943)'.
[8] Charles McDonald, Attaché US Embassy, 'Memorandum for the Ambassador' (18 May 1943); Hayes Papers, Box 1, Folder 'May-June 1943'.
[9] Whilst Schwartz estimated that the total number of refugees who reached Spain at the close of 1942 at 10,000; Emerson gave the higher estimate of 18,000. See FO to Hoare (24 December

skyrocketed. If the JDC's monthly budget for Spain was $1,500 during most of 1942, by April 1943 this figured had reached $80,000 —a 53-fold increase.[10] In sharp contrast with the situation in Spain, the Jewish refugee population in Portugal remained almost the same throughout the year 1943 —300 persons in Caldas, and 200 in Ericeira.[11] This explains why, by the spring of 1944, AFSC was spending no less than $86,100 per month in Spain, and just $16,800 for relief in Portugal.[12] Whilst its role in the Jewish refugee crisis had been crucial up to this point, following the events of November 1942, Francoist Spain became a true 'stumbling block' to Iberian migration.[13]

The attitudes of the Franco government towards this new wave of refugees during this period was inevitably linked to Spain's slow move from non-belligerence to neutrality. In early September 1942, Franco had appointed a new MAE, the Anglophile Francisco Gómez-Jordana, to replace the Falangista Ramón Serrano Súñer. To US Ambassador to Spain, Carlton Hayes, this had a very definite meaning:

> This means, to everybody here, the replacement of a petty, intriguing, and very slippery politician, troubled with stomach-ulcers and delusions of grandeur, by a gentleman who belongs to the nobility and the army and is honest, dependable, hard working, and endowed with good health and a sense of humor. To us, it means more —the replacement of a militantly pro-Axis man, by a man who is pro-Spanish first and then more sympathetic with the Allies than with the Axis'.[14]

Indeed, within weeks of 'Operation Torch', Jordana reassured the US ambassador that, despite the pro-Axis Falange, the Franco government was

1942); TNA, FO-371/32700; and Emerson, 'Refugee Statistics' (22 December 1942); TNA, FO-371/32700.

[10] Schwartz, 'Statement' (19 April 1943); JDC, Reel 1, Folder 434.

[11] Conard, 'Mid-December Report, Lisbon office' (20 December 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, numbered #600-680 (29 August-31 December 1943)'.

[12] AFSC Foreign Service Budget (21 April 1944); AFSC, Box 8, Folder 'Portugal: Administration, Finance'.

[13] The term was first used by John F. Rich, AFSC Refugee Section, Philadelphia, to Conard, AFSC Lisbon (18 February 1941); AFSC, Box 4, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, #184 to #455 (3 January-31 December 1942[sic])'

[14] Hayes to Roosevelt (30 September 1942); Hayes Papers, Box 3, Folder 'Memoranda to President Franklin D. Roosevelt'.

determined to pursue a policy of 'impartiality' towards the two sets of belligerents.[15] However, since the Spanish regime was now more than ever threatened by the Axis —on the north— and the Allies —on the south— Spanish 'impartiality' involved the balanced granting of concessions to both sides of the war in order to guarantee the survival of the Francoist regime. Thus, as seen by ambassador Hoare, the appointment of the Germanophile José María Doussinague as the MAE's Director of Foreign Policy —second highest rank within the ministry— was a way to appease the Germans for Jordana's appointment, which was widely perceived as a change of policy favourable to the Allies. Despite Jordana's efforts to stir the country towards neutrality, Doussinague's appointments had catastrophic consequences for the refugees. Despite the great interest of Allied government and relief organisations alike to tackle the dire refugee situation in Spain, Doussinague's policy opposed the release of escaped POWs and civilians whether of military age or not. In words of Sir Samuel Hoare, this intolerant policy contributed to making the situation 'far worse than it had been under Sr. Serrano Súñer'. If, by 8 November 1942, the population of the camp of Miranda de Ebro —which had been built to hold a maximum of 1,000 people— was 1,149; by Christmas day 1942, it held well over 3,000 internees, most of whom without sufficient food or blankets to survive the deep winter. When Hoare pressed Doussinague to release these men, the Spanish official responded in rather cynical terms that the Germans were protesting very strongly against the release of men going to fight them, and that the Spanish government had to consider the demands of both sides.[16]

The attitude of the Spanish government towards refugees, however, was not simply driven by foreign policy considerations: the Francoists were equally anxious that Republican exiles, Maquis fighters, and other 'undesirables' would cross into Spain. Thus, on 25 March 1943, the Spanish government notified the US and British ambassadors in Madrid that, in view of the constant clandestine crossing of the Pyrenees frontier and the impossibility of the state to attend to the needs of escapees, Spanish authorities 'have found themselves obliged to

[15] Hayes to Roosevelt (14 December 1942); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.
[16] Hoare, 'Annual Report 1942' [December 1942-January 1943]; Templewood Papers, XIII:22(50).

order the absolute closing of the frontier in question to all those who are not in possession of their legal documents, and instructions have [been] issued to the Governmental authorities severely to repress all infringement of this order'.[17]

More specifically, the Gerona Civil Governor and the Irún Military Governor both received instructions from the DGS in Madrid that 'from now onwards all foreigners entering Spain clandestinely are to be sent back to France where they will be handed over to the German authorities'.[18] Infuriated by the news, ambassador Hayes, who had already confronted the minister over Spain's refugee policy on several occasions, demanded an explanation from Jordana and condemned the DGS' policy of returning refugees to Nazi-occupied France.[19] Ambassador Hoare, on the other hand, believed that such decision was not the initiative of MAE, but of the Ministries of Interior and War. This view was favoured by Jordana himself, who insisted that he —as well as his ministry— opposed the refoulement of refugees, and that the decision to close the border had been taken, behind the MAE's back, by elements within Franco's government 'who did not share that opinion'.[20] However, this was not the case. The day before the closure of the Spanish frontier was effected, Jordana had sent to his ambassadors in Vichy and Berlin a message that leaves little doubt as to the MAE's connivance:

> 'The clandestine crossing of the Pyrenees by persons of Axis-enemy nationality is becoming a more serious problem each day, owing to its rapid growth in volume, and constant complications with the embassies of both sides. Please inform those authorities [Berlin and Vichy] that it is essential that [German] occupation authorities intensify frontier surveillance to the fullest, and that they make it as efficient and effective as possible. Even if Spain is willing to cooperate as much as possible in this service, it would be inadmissible for us to bear, not just the effort, but also the inevitable unpopularity of such repressive measures;

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[17] MAE's Note Verbale No. 190 to the British Embassy in Madrid (25 March 1943); TNA, FO-371/34740/C3651; and Note Verbale No. 182 to US Embassy in Madrid (25 March 1943); which can be found both in Hayes Papers, Box 1, Folder 'March-April 1943'.
[18] Hoare to FO (26 March 1943); TNA, FO-371/34739/C3421.
[19] Hayes to Hull (29 March 1943); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.
[20] Ronald H. Campbell, British Ambassador to Portugal, to Breckinridge Long, US State Department (6 April 1943); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.

> especially since it is the occupiers' inescapable responsibility to prevent the exit [from France], much more than it is our responsibility to hinder the entrance [into Spain]. For your own information, I discreetly disclose that the Government is willing to return to France persons arriving to Spain clandestinely, judging that this is the only method to halt the growing influx of refugees, and despite strong protests from the Allied countries —whose economic sanctions on Spain could have very grave consequences to our economy. Please treat this utmost important matter with urgency.[21]

Indeed, as Jordana prognosticated, the response of the Allied governments was both unilateral and unforgiving. Ambassador Hoare warned the Spanish government that the closing of the frontier would 'leave a stain on Spain's good name that the years will not remove'.[22] Simultaneously, Winston Churchill made 'strong representations' to the Spanish ambassador in London, the Duke of Alba, and made it clear that handing over refugees and POWs to the Germans would bring the 'destruction of good relations' between Spain and Great Britain.[23] In a similar fashion, Breckinridge Long, from the US State Department, also brought this to the attention of the Spanish ambassador in Washington, Juan Francisco de Cárdenas.[24] Even the Portuguese ambassador in Madrid made it clear that Salazar 'strongly disapproved of the closing of the frontier … and particularly the instructions to surrender prisoners and refugees to the Germans'; and warned that 'this dualism in the Spanish Government was having a bad effect on Spanish-Portuguese relations'.[25]

Under such pressure, it did not take more than a week for the Spanish government to revoke its previous order. By 1 April, both the British Consul in San Sebastián and the British Consul-General in Barcelona had reported that local authorities had received orders from Madrid with instructions not to return refugees at the border.[26] Meanwhile,

[21] Jordana to Spanish ambassadors in Berlin and Vichy (24 March 1943); AGA, AMAE, R-1078-6-742. My Translation. The original has been minimally simplified for the sake of intelligibility.
[22] Hoare to FO (2 April 1943); TNA, FO-371/34740/C3711.
[23] Churchill to FO (7 April 1943); TNA, FO-371/34740/C3940.
[24] Halifax to FO (3 May 1943); TNA, FO-371/34741/C4962.
[25] Hoare to FO (31 March 1943); TNA, FO-371/34740/C3601.
[26] See Hoare to FO (31 March and 1 April 1943); in TNA, FO-371/34740/C3566 and C3690 respectively.

Hayes was 'confidentially informed' that the MAE urged the German Embassy in Madrid to prevent refugees from crossing the frontier.[27] The Germans, in turn, pressed the Franco government to enforce the secret agreement between the Spanish and German police of July 1938, which stipulated that both states would reciprocally deliver to each other persons wanted by the police of the other country. As reported by the US ambassador, when Jordana indicated to the Germany Embassy that the refugees crossing into Spain were not guilty of any crime and were therefore not returnable, the German ambassador's response was that 'totalitarian countries did not have to go through the procedure of convicting persons by courts, and that the police were thoroughly capably of determining whether persons should be returned to another country'.[28] It is quite possible this was another of Jordana's attempts to downplay his own responsibility, but judging by the tone and kind of demand, it is equally possible that his recollection of the conversation with the Germans was genuine.

After the fall of Mussolini's regime in July 1943, Spanish non-belligerence in the conflict seemed no longer justified. On 26 September, Madrid announced the withdrawal of the Blue Division, and on 1 October, General Franco gave a speech to Falange's National Council in which the dictator described Spain's position as one of 'vigilant neutrality'.[29] This was the first time that the *Generalísimo* spoke of neutrality since Italy's declaration of war more than three years before. As ambassador Hayes noted, it was the first time that Franco attacked communism but defended capitalism — formerly he had attacked both communism and capitalism.[30] One of the first symptoms that the Franco regime was at last adopting the role of a neutral was the Allied-Axis prisoner exchange that took place in Barcelona on 26 October 1943 —indeed, this was the first POW exchange between both sides of the war. The German ships SS *Aquilea* and SS *Djenne* sailed from Marseille to take 1,000 German soldiers and personnel: mainly *Afrikakorps* and sailors captured in the Mediterranean war. The Allied ships SS *Cuba* and SS *Tairea*, in turn, took 1,083 Allied soldiers: including 512 Australians, 383 New Zealanders, and a smaller number of South Africans, British, and Indians who

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[27] Hayes, confidential telegram to Hull (1 April 1943); Hayes Papers, Box 1, Folder 'March-April 1943'.
[28] Hayes to Hull (13 April 1943); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.
[29] Preston, *The Politics of Revenge*, 77.
[30] Hayes to Hull (2 October 1943); Hayes Papers, Box 1, Folder 'September-October 1943'.

had fought in Greece and Crete. The two Allied ships continued to Port Said (Egypt) from whence the convalescent soldiers were repatriated home. The German and British ambassadors to Spain were present, and so were Spanish authorities, and the SRC.[31] On 17 May 1944 there was a second POW exchange in Barcelona. This time, the Swedish SS *Gripsholm* brought 713 German prisoners to Barcelona (including 375 women and children), and continued to Marseille on the SS *Gradisca*. In return, the SS *Gradisca* brought to Barcelona a group of 919 Allied POW who had been captured in Italy, and who continued on the SS *Gripsholm* to French North Africa.[32]

However, at the same time the Spanish government cultivated this external image of neutrality, there were elements within the Franco regime who were rather slow to come to terms with this new policy. The most problematic group was doubtlessly the Falange. On 12 September 1943, a 'brawl' took place in Barcelona between a group of Falangistas —including demobilised members of the Blue Division— and 21 French refugees whom the Civil Governor had recently threatened with deportation to France. It was only through the rapid intervention of the US and British Consul-Generals in that city that the refugees were spared from the beatings, and were instead imprisoned by local authorities. At 2am the following day, the group of Falangistas sought revenge by raiding Barcelona's Pension Roma (10 Plaza Real) where many refugees were housed. At gunpoint, 21 refugees were dragged out of their rooms in their underclothing and beaten in the middle of the square with iron rods, four men being badly injured. As reported by the British Embassy, a similar aggression occurred simultaneously in Madrid.[33] The Civil Governor of Barcelona tried to excuse the incident as a spontaneous and personal affair. But for the US Consul-General, the governor's defence was 'obviously far-fetched': 'by every account it was a well-organised proceeding in which approximately 150 Falangists took part. The chiefs drove up in automobiles and

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[31] See Hoare, 'The Simultaneous Repatriation of British and German Prisoners of War at Barcelona' ([1943]); Templewood Papers, XIII:5(62); Hayes Box 1, Folder 'May-June 1944'; as well as AP, 'Prisoner Exchange at Barcelona', *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* (17 May 1944); and AP, 'Prisoners Leave for Egypt: Exchange Complete at Barcelona', *The Sydney Morning Herald* (30 October 1943), 6.

[32] See AP, 'Spain Preparing Prisoner Exchange', *The Evening Independent* (13 May 1944), 9; AP, 'German and Allied Prisoner Exchange Completed in Spain', *The Evening Independent* (18 May 1944), 9.

[33] Yencken, British Embassy in Madrid, to FO (17 September 1943); TNA, FO-371/34748/C10789

gave the signal for action to their men hidden behind the arcades of the Plaza Real'.[34]

A similar concerted attack took place at 7 pm on 29 October, when two mobs of Falangistas simultaneously raided the headquarters of the French Red Cross (FRC) in Barcelona, and the office of the French Mission at Madrid's 21 Calle San Bernardo — the relief committee looking after French refugees. Suspiciously enough, the two guards usually stationed outside the San Bernado office were absent between 7 and 7:30 pm. The events were described by the US ambassador, who claimed that there was evidence of German support in the operation: 'Those in [the] waiting room were ordered to face the wall and put their hands up. Files in the office were ransacked and fifteen hundred exit passes, which had recently been granted to the refugees interned in the Malaga bullring, were burned'.[35] But this is not the only example of Falange's anti-refugee savagery. On 18 July 1944, coinciding with the anniversary of Franco's 1936 coup, a further attack was perpetrated against the premises of the JDC in Barcelona. This was the second one directed against Sequerra's staff since August 1942. In this instance, a crowd of thirty armed Falangistas, including again some former 'Blue Divisionaries', forced entry into the JDC office in Barcelona's Hotel Bristol. Although nobody was injured —luckily, it was a national holiday— the gang of Falangistas stole about 4,000 dossiers containing vital information of JDC refugee cases, causing unmeasurable trouble to Sequerra's organisation and their relief activities. Doussinague condemned the attack in name of the MAE, and said that aggressors would be punished. However, although two of the perpetrators —aged twenty-one and twenty-two— were arrested and judged, Sequerra refused to ask for compensation.[36]

Whilst the fanatics of the Falange were free to perpetrate their assaults with little to no retribution, the Spanish government continued to return Jewish refugees to the Germans until the summer of 1944. Paradoxically, as the war came to a close, the number of these cases augmented, rather than diminished. In words of American

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[34] US Consul-General, 'Memorandum' (14 September 1943); TNA, FO-371/34748/C11268.
[35] See Hayes, Memorandum to Jordana (5 November 1943); Hayes Papers, Box 3 Folder 'Spain-General History, 1944'; and Hull to Hayes (4 December 1943); NARA, RG-59, Box 1284, Reel 37.
[36] See W. Walton Butterworth, Chargé d'Affaires US Embassy in Madrid (25 July 1944); MAE's Note Verbale No. 757 (5 October 1944); as well as photographic evidence of the attack on the premises of JDC Barcelona, in NARA, RG-59, Box 5533. For Sequerra's own account, see 'Rapport sur l'Activité à Barcelone de l'American Joint Distribution Committee en 1944' (undated); JDC, Reel 70, Folder 919.

Quaker Philip Conard, this was a problem 'which required endless work and untold patience, and which can sometimes be solved and sometimes cannot'. Such was the case of the German Jew Arno Geyer Zitmann and his wife Marie Louise Tournier Lacaver de Geyer, of French nationality. The couple came to Spain in 1921 and had five children born in Spain. Over the years, the whole family acquired Spanish nationality. Arno owned an electric power plant in Cólliga (Cuenca), and, during the Spanish Civil War, served as captain in the Republican army. Following the Nationalist victory, he remained imprisoned between 1939 and 44. Meanwhile, in 1942, Arno's oldest son was taken away by the Germans for 'military service' and never returned. On 20 June 1944, the DGS issued Arno Geyer with an expulsion order. The Representation in Spain of American Relief Organisations (RSARO), a relief committee set up by the US Embassy in Madrid, intervened in Arno's favour, but the DGS resolved not to stop 'the expulsion of these foreigners from the country'. On 20 July 1944, Marie Louise was arrested, and a week later —with the Allied army already in Normandy— the couple was delivered to the Germans at the Irún-Hendaye border post.[37]

Another case is that of Josef Lukaschewitsh, a Jewish farmer native of Susanine, in the Crimean Peninsula, who was forced to work for the Wehrmacht in September 1941. In early 1943, he managed to escape and reach a unit of the Spanish Blue Division, which was 30km away from his position, and began working as a cook for them. When the Blue Division returned to Spain, he managed to sneak across the border in one of their uniforms and lived in hiding in Spain. In March 1944, he was was arrested by the Spanish police, and on 15 June, Lukaschewitsh was handed over to the Germans at the Irún-Hendaye border.[38] Leon Hoffmann, a Jewish refugee from Luxembourg, was arrested in Spanish Morocco and accused of espionage activities. He was sent to prison in Madrid (Prison Porlier), and on 11 April 1943, was transferred to the Prison in San Sebastián, from where he was deported to France. 'Federico Pablo Hilke', a German Jewish refugee who migrated to Spain in June 1933 on a regular visa, was arrested eight days after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War by the rebels, and endured internment in several prisons and camps between 1936 and 1941. He was

[37] See Conard, 'Report on Visit to Spain' (16 October 1944); AFSC, Box 8, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from #852-880 (7 November-14 December 1944)'; and David Blickenstaff, RSARO Madrid, to MAE (18 September 44); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/5.
[38] Conard, letter No. 853 (16 October 1944); AFSC, Box 7, Folder 'Portugal: Cases'.

liberated from the Vitoria prison in September 1941, only to be arrested again on the train ride to Madrid for lacking proper documentation. On 9 July 1943, RSARO managed to liberate Hilke from the Valladolid prison. On 1 November, however, RSARO received a desperate telegram sent by Hilke himself in which the German refugee said that he was being taken to the Irún border for deportation, and begged for assistance. RSARO requested the intervention of the delegates of the SRC and the FRC in San Sebastián, who managed to obtain the promise from the Military Commander at Irún, as well as from the MAE, that Hilke would not be deported. Despite the assurances, Hilke was deported to France on 10 November 1943.[39]

The US ambassador in Madrid complained to the MAE in numerous occasions, claiming that these refugees were protected under international law and should not be turned over to the Germans, although to no avail.[40] Hayes tried pressing Spain to implement its declaration of neutrality, which was conditional on terminating 'once and for all the close cooperation between the Spanish police and German official and unofficial agents'. Without the abolition of the 'Himmler Agreement', as Hayes called it, the ambassador warned that Spain's neutrality 'will not have the effect it was doubtless intended to have'.[41] Despite continued pressure from the Allied governments, however, and reiterated assurances from the MAE that such practices would stop, the US Embassy continued to receive 'disturbing' reports indicating that German deserters and refugees arriving to Spain 'have been delivered by Spanish police officials to the custody of German police and Gestapo agents'. The MAE, in turn, dismissed these accusations as false.[42]

When comparing Spanish refugee policies with those of Portugal during the same period, it is difficult not to notice the discrepancies. When, on 23 March 1944, President Roosevelt issued his statement condemning Nazi atrocities, Portuguese newspapers such as *Diario de Noticias,* and *Journal do Comercio* eulogised the 'high political and moral significance' of the US President's statement in their front-page editorials.[43] As seen by

[39] Blickenstaff to Niles W. Bond, Third Embassy Secretary at the US Embassy in Madrid (25 August 1943); AFSC, Box 10, Folder 'Spain: Letters, confidential, 1943-45'.
[40] Hayes to Jordana (9 November 1943); Hayes Papers, Box 1, Folder 'November-December 1943'.
[41] Hayes, 'Proposed Statement to General Franco' (April 1944); Hayes Papers, Box 1, Folder 'March-April 1944'.
[42] Hates to Hull (7 December 1943); Hayes Papers, Box 1, Folder 'November-December 1943'.
[43] John Pehle, 'Developments during the week of May 8-13, 1944' (ca. May 1944); WRB, Part

ambassador Hoare, the Portuguese government 'with whom we have been in constant touch, are behaving extremely well and are expediting visas provided that the refugees do not remain in Portugal'.[44]

I, Reel 26, Folder 1.

[44] Hoare to Eleanore Rathbone, Parliamentary Committee on Refugees (3 May 1943); Templewood Papers, XIII:5(14).

Following the German occupation of Vichy France in November 1942, Spain was in desperate need of a comprehensive relief solution. Faced with this new wave of undocumented refugees and the obstructive border policy of the Spanish government, the reaction of the Lisbon-based relief organisations and the US Embassy in Madrid was immediate. On the morning of 9 November 1942, only one day after the onset of 'Operation Torch', Joseph Schwartz cabled the JDC headquarters in New York regarding the alarming refugee situation in Spain. Refugees crossed into Spain illegally by the hundreds, and since most of them lacked proper documentation, at least ten persons were sent back to France on that morning alone.[45] It was then that Hayes, fulfilling the promise he had made to Schwartz during the summer, began to explore the possibility of allowing the JDC and the AFSC to offer assistance to refugees in Spain under the sponsorship of the US Embassy in Madrid.

This possibility had been on the table since 5 November, when the US State Department gave its preliminary consent to allow US relief organisations to operate in Spain if they could secure permission from the Spanish Government —possibly in anticipation to the North African landings.[46] On 7 December 1942, Hayes and Schwartz met in Madrid to discuss the matter. The US ambassador strongly favoured 'the unification of their operations through a single directive agency', as the co-existence between several relief organisations 'would inevitably result in confusion and duplication of effort'. Schwartz acceded. Within days, this agency received the name of Representation in Spain of American Relief Organizations (RSARO). Thereafter, it would be the policy of the US Embassy in Madrid that any American organisation wishing to conduct relief work in Spain had to do so through RSARO —a policy that was also preferred by the Spanish government.[47]

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[45] Schwartz to Leavitt (9 November 1942); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.

[46] Schauffler, AFSC Philadelphia, to Conard, AFSC Lisbon (5 November 1942); AFSC, Box 4, Folder 'Portugal: Letters to, administrative, numbered, #14 to #74, incomplete (14 February-30 December 1942)'.

[47] Hayes, 'Report on Activities of RSARO', to Hull (24 January 1944); AFSC, Box 7, Folder 'Spain: General'.

Meanwhile, ambassador Hayes sought official support from Washington. In a telegram to President Roosevelt dated 14 December 1942, the former University of Columbia Professor explained Spain's dire refugee situation. He also stressed how crucial it was to expedite the transit of refugees through the Pyrenees to allow them to join the Allied forces in North Africa. In addition, he also emphasised that there were already several thousand French and other Axis refugees interned in Spanish concentration camps and prisons, and that there were more arriving from France every day, most of them illegally. Although the British Embassy was at that time caring for 2,500 refugees at Miranda, the problem was far too overwhelming for them alone, and Hayes proposed that the US Embassy find a way 'to give relief en masse'.[48]

Both President Roosevelt and the US State Department were persuaded. On 5 February 1943, the President's Emergency Fund allocated $100,000 to fund Hayes' relief programme for Spain, on condition that 'no distinction of race, colour, or religion is to be made between refugees so that Jewish refugees will not be the responsibility of the Joint Distribution Committee while the sum in question lasts'.[49] As stipulated by the US Government, Hayes would report on the Embassy's relief activities to Herbert H. Lehman, director of the recently created Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations (OFRRO) —a precursor to UNRRA.[50]

Hayes' relief programme for Spain was only made possible by the shifting balance of power in the region and Madrid's promised 'impartiality' towards the two sets of belligerents. The first gesture of propitiation from the Spanish government in this sense came on Christmas Eve of 1942, when the Franco government announced it would release from Spanish camps and prisons all refugees who had funds to maintain themselves, with the exception of men of military age from belligerent countries.[51] Not content with the promises made by the Franco government, Hayes urged Washington to remind Juan Francisco

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48 Hayes to Roosevelt (14 December 1942); and Hayes to Hull (22 December 1942); both in NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.

49 Halifax to FO (6 February 1943; TNA, FO-371/36631/W2154.

50 Herbert H. Lehman, director of Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations (OFRRO), to Hull (5 February 1943); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.

51 Hayes to Hull (24 December 1942); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.

de Cárdenas, the Spanish ambassador to the US, that Spain would not be treated as neutral unless it granted Allied refugees 'as favourable treatment as that given to Axis refugees'. In particular, Hayes made reference to Spain's cooperation with the German and Italian armistice commissions providing assistance to Axis escapees.[52] Furthermore, Franco's Spain also acted as the protecting power for Germany and Italy, which meant that the Spanish government was responsible for looking after the interests of German and Italian refugees in Palestine, Algeria, South Africa, and other territories without Axis diplomatic representation, through the mediation of the International Red Cross (IRC). Indeed, when contextualised within the camp situation across Europe, the request made by some Wehrmacht POWs seem rather extraordinary. In the POW camp at Latrun (British Palestine), for instance, German prisoners denounced the lack of electricity, cinema, and radio, as a breach of the Hague Convention of 1907.[53]

While Hayes championed RSARO's enterprise with both Washington and Madrid, Schwartz and Conard had been seeking for the right person to lead the office. Their choice was David Blickenstaff, an US citizen barely twenty-seven years old at the time of his appointment. Blickenstaff was born in 1915 in Pasadena (California), but grew up and went to school in India where his father was in charge of finances for the United Board of Missions, a Christian relief organisation. Blickenstaff himself was a member of the Church of the Brethren.[54] In November 1937, upon graduating in International Relations from Northwestern University, the AFSC sent him as delegate of the Brethren Service Committee (BSC) to work for the Quaker relief programme in civil war Spain with headquarters in Bilbao —behind Nationalist lines. In 1940-41, he worked as AFSC delegate in unoccupied France, and married Janine

[52] Hayes to Hull (4 January 1943); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.
[53] Although the concept 'protecting power' had existed since the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, the institution was only formally introduced by the Geneva Convention of 1929. See AGA, AMAE, R-1131-1-345 (available in USHMM, RG-36.001M).
[54] The Church of the Brethren is a German-American pietist church which focuses their theology on the New Testament. One of the three historical 'peace churches' alongside the Quakers and the Mennonites, the Brethren opposed slave trade as early as 1792. See for instance Albert N. Keim, and Grant M. Stoltzfus, *The Politics of Conscience: the Historic Peace Churches and America at War, 1917-1955* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1988).

Ybargoyen, daughter of the Uruguayan Consul in Marseille. Between June and October 1942, the Blickenstaffs directed the BSC's civilian public service camp in Puerto Rico. In November, David and Janine sailed to Europe as BSC-AFSC delegates to unoccupied France, but before they reached their destination Vichy France was taken by the Nazis. Since both were fluent in Spanish and French, and David had previously worked in Nationalist territory during the Spanish Civil War, they represented the perfect fit for this position and were offered to head the RSARO office in Madrid.

David and Janine Blickenstaff arrived in Spain on 27 January 1943 in quality of AFSC representatives as far as visas were concerned, even though they would spend most of their time and energy looking after JDC cases. At first, they worked from the premises of the US Embassy in Madrid and several hotels —Hotel Nacional and Hotel Gaylord. On 10 April 1943, the Spanish MAE authorised the opening of a separate office owned by the American Embassy at 20 Eduardo Dato, which was equidistant from the US Embassy and the headquarters of the SRC. By that time, the USC had already established partnership with RSARO, and the National Catholic Welfare Committee (NCWC) was negotiating its participation. 'Here it is almost as if every committee under your roof were rolled into one under a single direction, but with the controlling committees far away', explained an RSARO member of staff to the British Quakers of London's Bloomsbury House.[55] By January 1944, RSARO had grown into a staff of 18, and provided material assistance to 1,600 stateless refugees in Spain.[56]

Upon its establishment in late January 1943, RSARO's most pressing tasks were to organise relief for the approximately 3,600 refugees interned at Miranda de Ebro, and to negotiate their release.[57] The majority of Miranda's population were male refugees of military age who had entered Spain clandestinely fleeing the Nazis, a 'veritable Noah's Ark of every species of

[55] Robert Briggs, RSARO, to FCRA London (March 1945); RG-59.027M, FCRA/8.
[56] Hayes, 'Report on Activities of RSARO', to Hull (24 January 1944); AFSC, Box 7, Folder 'Spain: General'.
[57] Howard Wriggins, AFSC Lisbon, to Evelyn Wriggins (16 January 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Portugal: Individuals, Howard Wriggins'.

refugee', as ambassador Hoare put it.[58] As most Jewish refugees at Miranda were stateless they were in a much less favourable position than those of Allied nationality, who receive food packages distributed by the British Embassy via Gibraltar. In this sense, Miranda was different to the camps in Southern France because Allied governments had much interest in looking after their nationals interned there, and sent large quantities of supplies and money to them. During 1943, there were an average of 16,000 pesetas being poured every day into Miranda by embassies and legations, and that is excluding food parcels.[59] But the majority of stateless Jews had no source of support, and thus were in a hopeless situation. The representative of the Jewish-stateless prisoners at Miranda, Dr Georges Outman, described the situation of his peers in this way:

> 'Our morale is very low. The conditions in which we live are worse than anything you could imagine. We sleep on the floor, without mattress, without pillow, tortured by innumerable flies and bedbugs. Everything is covered with a thick stratum of dust which, when raised by the wind, penetrates everywhere and especially in the food. The most terrible thing is the almost complete lack of water. There are just a few faucets and three showers which function only from 10 to 12:30 for the entire camp … They must stay in line for hours, in the burning sun, in order to get a shower and some food at the canteen'.[60]

Internment conditions at Miranda were so appalling —owing to overcrowding, terrible hygiene, undernourishment, and harsh weather conditions— that nearly all of the camp's 3,500 inmates participated in a week-long hunger strike in January 1943. Another reason why RSARO prioritised the release of internees from Spanish camps and prisons is because, since Spanish authorities gave them no facilities to reach consulates, shipping agencies, or relief committees, they had no means of arranging their

[58] Hoare, *Ambassador on Special Mission*, 233. For a more in-depth study of the Miranda camp see for instance José Ángel Fernández López, *Historia del Campo de Concentración de Miranda de Ebro, 1937-1947* (Miranda de Ebro: J. A. Fernández, 2003).
[59] Lois K. Jessup, 'Report from Spain' (19 August 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Spain: Correspondence and Reports'.
[60] Dr Georges Outman, 'Situation of our Proteges in Camp Miranda de Ebro' (25 July 1943); AFSC, Box 10, Folder 'Spain: Letters from Madrid'. Original translation from French.

documentation and emigration. In fact, there were many instances of refugees who had been granted visas for a country overseas and were not able to migrate simply because they could not reach the relevant consulate.

Since foreigners had little chances of obtaining working permits, the release of refugees was conditional on RSARO taking financial responsibility for these persons once they were liberated. Every new release added $50-60 per month to their budget. To finance such spending, the AFSC headquarters in Philadelphia received a US Treasury licence in April 1943, to transfer regular remittances to RSARO Madrid.

But RSARO also looked after the wellbeing of refugees inside Miranda, and more specifically of Jews. Following the liberation of France in August 1944, hundreds of German border patrols at the Pyrenees fled into Spain and ended up in Miranda, alongside Jewish refugees. In view that some Jews suffered physical and verbal violence at the hands of Nazi deserters, RSARO acted in their behalf and obtained the separation of both groups.[61]

Initially, the British Embassy took care of British and Canadian refugees. Following the Allied landings in French North Africa, they began to look after Belgian, Luxembourg, and Yugoslav nationals as well.[62] At the close of 1942, the British Embassy was supporting 2,569 refugees at Miranda with weekly allowances and food, and 438 more in prisons throughout the country.[63] By that time, Hoare already recognised that his 'minute staff' could hardly deal with the influx of refugees into Spain, and urged the US government to take care of French nationals —the largest group— in addition to US and stateless refugees.[64] The unofficial representatives of the Czech and Polish governments-in-exile, on the other hand, worked closely with RSARO to look after their

[61] RSARO Madrid, 'Trip to North of Spain taken by Janine Blickenstaff, David Blikenstaff, and Lawrence L. Parrish, 18-23 August 1944'; USC, bMS-16007/2(3).

[62] See Paul-Henry Spaak, Belgian MFA, to Sir Lancelot Oliphant, British Ambassador Extraordinary to Belgium and Minister-Plenipotentiary to Luxembourg (21 December 1942); TNA, FO-371/32700; and George William Rendel, Minister Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, to Eden (13 January 1943); TNA, FO-371/34736/C677.

[63] The care for French nationals was the joint work of the US Embassy, the French Mission in Spain, and the FRC. See Brigadier Torr, British Embassy in Madrid Military Attaché, 'Memorandum on Prisoners of War & Refugees in Spain' (26 December 1942); TNA, FO-371/34736/C203.

[64] Hoare to FO (24 December 1942); TNA, FO-371/34736/C203.

nationals.[65] The is evidence, however, that the Polish legation in Spain hindered the release of Jewish men and women of Polish nationality, as it considered them to be 'in a very different category' to non-Jewish Poles, so they were considered de facto 'stateless' and assisted by RSARO.[66] In any case, the 'bestowal' of nationalities by camp authorities at Miranda de Ebro was more or less arbitrary, since many refugees and POWs often claimed the nationality they wanted upon arrival to Spain. Given that the British Embassy was the only source of relief for Miranda internees before the creation of RSARO, many escapees claimed Canadian nationality to receive British protection. For this reason, there were hundreds of French-speaking internees at Miranda who were registered as 'Canadian-Yugoslavs', 'Canadian-Czechs', and so on. After the establishment of RSARO, however, the status of stateless refugees in Spain improved significantly in terms of relief and release opportunities.

It is no coincidence that RSARO became known as 'the embassy of the stateless'. Nominally, the official body in charge of the interests of stateless persons in Spain was the Spanish Red Cross (SRC). In practice, it was Blickenstaff's office that represented and offered relief to persons who had no diplomatic protection in Spain. This included all Jews from Germany and German-occupied territories, as well as many non-Jewish persons from Germany, Austria, former Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union. Smooth cooperation between RSARO and the Spanish Red Cross owed much to the good nature of the director and only staff member of the SRC, Juan Manuel de Agrela y Pardo, Count of La Granja, whom Herbert Katzki described as 'humane and most anxious to serve'.[67] Thanks to his cachet, the Count of La Granja helped advance RSARO's goals with the Madrid government particularly at the beginning of its relief activities. During the first week of February 1943, for instance, the Count of la Granja persuaded the three government branches with jurisdiction over Miranda de Ebro —the Army, the

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[65] Marian Szmulakowski had been the Polish Minister Plenipotentiary in Spain since 1935. The representative of the Czechoslovak Government-in-exile was Zdenck Formánek.
[66] 'Report of Discussion with Florian Piskorski of the American-Polish Relief Council' (5 February 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Spain: Correspondence and Reports'.
[67] Katzki, JDC Lisbon, to JDC New York (6 April 1943); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 915.

DGS, and the Ministry of the Interior— to authorise the release of men above military age or unfit for military service, on condition that RSARO would take care of their maintenance and organise their emigration from Spain.[68] In this sense, liberations were made in the name of the SRC but had to be effected by RSARO personnel. Although the first release from Miranda took place on 18 February, large scale liberations began only towards mid-March. By the end of April, Blickenstaff and Sequerra had jointly liberated 349 stateless Jewish refugees from Miranda. Additionally, they also liberated internees of several other nationalities. If, at the beginning of 1943 there were 3,600 internees at Miranda, this number was reduced by two thirds by May 1943. But their work was far from finished. Ongoing clandestine arrivals to Spain, as well as the policy of the Franco government of 'cleaning out' refugees in forced residence by sending them to Miranda, increased the camp's population in 1,200 persons during the first two weeks of June alone.[69]

The policy of the Spanish government towards refugees in general evolved in parallel to the development of RSARO. On 9 February, as a result of the Count of La Granja's successful negotiations with Spanish officials, the MAE issued, with consent from the Ministries of War and the Interior, a first set of rules regarding the treatment to be accorded to refugees in Spain. Male refugees of Military age —defined here as 20 to 40 years old— were to be interned in Miranda and other camps under military authority. Male refugees not of military age, as well as all citizens of neutral nationality, were to be released provided that that they could be provided for by relief organisations. Civilians of belligerent states, women, and children crossing the Pyrenees clandestinely would be able to avoid imprisonment if they could provide evidence of means of self-support within Spain. In such cases, refugees were to be allowed to reside temporarily in Spain in regime of 'surveilled residence' (*residencia vigilada*) under the authority of the relevant Civil Governor, until they could arrange

[68] See Wriggins, AFSC Lisbon, to Rogers, AFSC Philadelphia (17 February 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Portugal: Individuals, Howard Wriggins'; and Jessup, 'Report from Spain' (19 August 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Spain: Correspondence and Reports'.
[69] See Katzki, JDC Lisbon, to JDC New York (27 March; 6 and 28 April; and 17 May 1943); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 915; and Blickenstaff's report for AFSC Lisbon (23 August 1943); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 916.

their papers for departure.[70] These 'surveilled residences' could be either pensions located in towns, or the so-called 'balnearios' ('spas') in areas far from the city, such as Jaraba, Alhama de Aragón (Zaragoza), Sobrón (Álava), Molinar de Carranza, and Urberuaga de Ubilla (Vizcaya). Conditions at these 'balnearios' was variable. Some were in good shape, some others were horrible. In some cases guards were respectful and kind, in others cruel and brutal. Almost all of them, however, were populated with stateless refugees, including women and children.[71]

Upon obtaining release from Spanish camps or prisons, refugees were required to present themselves in Madrid to report to the headquarters of the DGS —which had lists with the names of all refugees set free— and to roam the offices of the various official and unofficial diplomatic representations until they found a suitable authority to support them financially and to organise their evacuation from Spain. When refugees arrived at Blickenstaff's office, the first question was that of nationality. If they could claim citizenship of a country with diplomatic representation in Spain, refugees were redirected to the relevant national representation. If refugees proven to be stateless, their case was then taken up by one of the relief committees represented by RSARO.[72] Blickenstaff's 'clientele' consisted of two main demographics: refugees fleeing racial and political persecution, and young men seeking to volunteer for the Allied armies. RSARO was more concerned with the former group, even though these categories frequently overlapped. As Hayes concluded after the first year of RSARO activity, Blickenstaff's organisation 'effectively filled what might otherwise have been a serious gap in the Allied program of refugee relief in Spain'.[73]

Blickenstaff's office was a modest space consisting of eight small rooms

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[70] 'Rules Established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Determining the Situation of Foreign Refugees in Spain' (9 February 1943); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.

[71] See Robert Dexter to Raymond Bragg, USC Executive Director (13 September 1943); Dexter papers, box 1, folder 32; and Robert Dexter, [Report on the refugee situation in Spain] (30 September 1943); USC, bMS-16024/7(13).

[72] See Jessup, 'Report from Spain' (19 August 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Spain: Correspondence and Reports'; and Conard, 'Report on Visit to Spain' (16 October 1944); AFSC, Box 8, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from #852-880 (7 November-14 December 1944)'.

[73] Hayes, 'Report on Activities of RSARO', to Stettinius (24 January 1944); AFSC, Box 7, Folder 'Spain: General'.

filled with second-hand furniture and a rather international team of relief workers. In addition to David and Janine, who interviewed new refugee cases, the rest of RSARO's staff consisted mainly of refugee-volunteers. George W. Lackenbacher was amongst the first group of refugees liberated from Miranda, and became David's right-hand man.[74] Werner Michalski and Samuel Federmann handled payments and monthly cash allowances and maintained correspondence with refugees in camps, prisons, and forced residence. Knut Behr was in charge of money transfers and prepared food parcels that were distributed every fortnight. Dr Maurice Ghelber kept medical files of all refugees receiving medical assistance, and visited refugees at their homes to advise on medical questions, though technically as a refugee-physician he could not officially practice medicine. Richard Moering and Herbert Hirschfeld worked in the records room, and kept dossiers and a central card index up to date. Serge Mouravieff was in charge of outgoing mail, and sent money postal orders. Lastly, the young Wolf Bruckstein acted as an errand boy and was also in charge of opening the door and wrapping packages.[75]

As the only body officially recognised by the Spanish government to grant relief in Spain, RSARO's frenetic activity was arguably greater than any other relief committee operating in the Iberian Peninsula at any point during the war. This was at least the opinion of the Quaker Philip Conard: 'David's office has much more movement than we ever had in Lisbon, even in our busiest epoch … They receive [visits] in the mornings only, and have from 50 to 75 people to interview every morning on the average. One morning while I was there there were 244 callers'.[76] In view of the great service that RSARO was doing with refugees, Blickenstaff progressively gained the confidence of the Spanish government to the point that he was given privileged access to officials at the

[74] Born in 1900 Vienna to a Jewish family, Lackenbacher was working in France when the war broke out. He managed to escape to Spain in September 1942. Lackenbacher was amongst the first group of refugees released by RSARO on 18 February 1943. Since he was too old to join the Allied forces, he became Blickenstaff's first assistant, and worked towards the maintenance and release of Miranda refugees. Lackenbacher left Spain in 1945. Conard said of him: 'his experience as a refugee gave him an understanding of their problems and a sympathy for them as persons, that determined his unfailing kindly and friendly attitude and unbound devotion to relief'. See USHMM, AFSC Case Files, No. 8763, George W. Lackenbacher.
[75] Blickenstaff, RSARO Madrid, to AFSC Lisbon (23 August 1943); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 916.
[76] Conard to Robert K. Gassler, New York (29 October 1944); Conard Papers, Box 1.

MAE and other ministries. Thanks to RSARO's status, Blickenstaff was also able to obtain special concessions from Madrid that would have been unthinkable merely a year before. In December 1943, for instance, RSARO obtained the Franco government's consent to send Christmas parcels to all refugees confined in forced residence and prisons across Spain. These included raisins, masse pain, biscuits, marmalade, nougat, nuts, chocolate, and cigarettes.[77]

Despite the great service that RSARO did, not just for the refugees, but also for the Franco government, Spanish officials were not always sympathetic to their work. As seen by AFSC relief worker Lois K. Jessup, the DGS was without doubt the section of the Spanish government that posed more obstacles to RSARO: 'it is, in everything we attempt, a constant pressure of opposition and in some matters a concrete obstacle blocking our way'. Another issue facing Blickenstaff's office was the difficult task of finding Spanish personnel to join RSARO: 'Spanish workers who are Falangists are of course not acceptable, and those who are not Falangists run some personal risk in accepting this kind of work'.[78] These were no exaggerations on his part. As reported by Conard, of the AFSC office in Lisbon, the US Embassy in Madrid was under constant surveillance from two Spanish armed guards who were stationed at all times outside its door. Sometimes, as many as fifteen of them could gather without notice and for no particular reason. Blickenstaff himself reported he was constantly 'shadowed' by police agents in plainclothes, and had every one of his moves observed by a 'plant' —i.e. informer— among the refugees.[79] In sharp contrast, Conard found the Portuguese PVDE to be very cordial and friendly: 'We have had but little relation with Portuguese authorities except the International Police [PVDE]. Consultations with the Foreign Office [MNE] and with the Export Control were only once each during this period'.[80]

[77] Blickenstaff to AFSC Lisbon (28 December 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Spain: Correspondence and Reports'.
[78] Lois Jessup, 'Report from Spain' (19 August 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Spain: Correspondence and Reports'.
[79] Conard, 'Report on Visit to Spain' (16 October 1944); AFSC, Box 8, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from #852-880 (7 November-14 December 1944)'.
[80] Conard, 'Report on AFSC Lisbon work from December 1943 to August 1944' (15 August 1944); AFSC, Box 8, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from #681-#799 (3 January-18 July 1944)'.

To a large extent, RSARO's success was made possible thanks to the efficient cooperation between various relief committees. From the beginning, RSARO was fuelled especially by the AFSC and the JDC. In addition to establishing the Madrid committee in early 1943, the AFSC and JDC offices in Lisbon also provided most of its funds during the first months of 1943. From the autumn of 1943, two more relief agencies started to share the costs of RSARO: the BSC and the USC. The Brethren, additionally, assumed travelling expenses for the Blickenstaff couple. By the spring of 1944, the HICEM and NCWC also began contributing towards RSARO's expenses. Throughout the war, however, JDC remained the largest contributor to RSARO's bills —from 50 per cent in early 1943, down to 40 per cent towards the end of the war. Besides sharing the Madrid committee's expenses, the relief agencies operative in the Peninsula also contributed enormously with RSARO. The head of the AFSC office in Lisbon, for instance, reported having constant exchange with RSARO in Madrid, and three to six daily telephone calls the Lisbon offices of HICEM, JDC, and COMASSIS.[81]

Cooperation between Blickenstaff's RSARO in Madrid and Sequerra's JDC office in Barcelona, on the other hand, began before the two relief workers first met in March 1943. Despite some initial overlap between the two organisations, by the summer of 1943 they agreed to each focus on a different geography: from Barcelona, Sequerra was to care for the Catalan region in the North-West of Spain; whereas Blickenstaff, from Madrid, would care for the rest of Spain including the Atlantic end of the Franco-Spanish border. Additionally, the head of the JDC office in Barcelona, who had no official status, stayed in close touch with Blickenstaff and the US Embassy whenever he had any troubles with the Spanish police.[82] Likewise, the delegate of the FRC in San Sebastián, André Mattei, obtained standing authorisation to grant relief in Blickenstaff's name to any refugee reaching Spain through the Irún-Hendaye border even before Blickenstaff himself had the time to screen the refugee or

[81] Wriggins, 'Mid-August Report, Lisbon office' (10 August 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from, numbered #456-599 (2 January-26 August 1943)'.
[82] Maurice Kranz to Leavitt, JDC New York (25 March 1944); JDC, Reel 70, Folder 917.

negotiate their release from prison with the competent authorities.[83]

However, there was at least one relief agency who felt left out of the RSARO relief project for Spain: the USC. For months, the Unitarians tried to obtain Hayes' approval to open an USC office in Barcelona, the most 'needy spot' due to its proximity to the Franco-Spanish border. Ambassador Hayes, however, remained adamant that all US private relief should be centralised in RSARO, under his close supervision. According to the ambassador, this simplified communications with the Spanish government and avoided the confusion created by the multiplicity of relief agencies in Lisbon, which Spanish authorities were not likely to tolerate. Hayes did invite, however, the USC to become full cooperating organisation of RSARO, alongside AFSC and the Joint. Thus, in September 1943, USC agreed to contribute $2,000 per month to RSARO's overhead costs. In return, RSARO would recommend to the USC potential refugee cases of their interest, and distribute $15,000 in funds for the care of USC cases within Spain.[84]

But the USC was still desirous to send a delegate to join Blickenstaff's team, and proposed Celine Rott de Neufville as USC representative for Spain.[85] Neufville's candidacy was soon dismissed, however, since her work with Spanish republicans during the Spanish Civil War made her *persona non grata* with the Spanish government and thus put RSARO's own existence at risk.[86] The Unitarians then proposed USC Associate Director, Rev. Howard Brooks, to join Blickenstaff's team, but his candidacy was again rejected by the US ambassador when he learnt that Brooks intended to publicise the work of the USC in the US gathering stories that would 'vividly explain the [USC's] work for refugees abroad'. Beside this official explanation, another aspect that might

[83] Conard, 'Report on Visit to Spain' (16 October 1944); AFSC, Box 8, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from #852-880 (7 November-14 December 1944)'.
[84] See Dexter to Bragg, [Report on trip to Spain] (21 August 1943); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 31; and Dexter to Bragg (13 September 1943); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 32; as well as the minutes from the USC Executive Committee meetings (22 September and 5 October 1943); USHMM, RG-67.012, Box 2, Folder 18.
[85] USC, 'Minutes from the General Committee meeting' (12 October 1943); USHMM, RG-67.012, Box 2, Folder 18
[86] Celine Rott de Neufville was instead sent as USC representative to Santo Domingo. See USC, 'Minutes from the General Committee meeting' (16 November 1943); USHMM, RG-67.012, Box 2, Folder 18.

have influenced the ambassador's decision was the USC's close ties with partisan organisations that were out of favour with the US Department of State, such as the International Rescue and Relief Committee (IRRC), the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee (JAFC), and the French underground. In fact, five of USC's executive board members —including Robert and Elizabeth Dexter, Noel Field, Charles Joy, and Rev. Howard Brooks himself— were involved in OSS espionage activities by 1943.[87]

In contrast with the USC's proactively anti-fascist stance, the pacifist neutrality of the American Quakers of the AFSC earned them greater support from the US government in matters of relief than the USC could have ever enjoyed. Although the Unitarians recognised that the complexity of the refugee crisis demanded the close and efficient cooperation between all relief committees, the philosophical and practical differences between the USC and the AFSC gave rise to competition and rivalry between them. Unitarian resentment towards the AFSC only increased when Hayes gave green light to AFSC relier worker Lawrence L. Parrish to join the RSARO staff in Madrid — though not in capacity of AFSC representative— only a few weeks after rejecting two Unitarian candidates for that same position. Disappointed, the Unitarians felt like 'picking up crumbs from under the Quaker table'.[88] Besides Parrish, however, the only other US citizen that Hayes authorities to join Blickenstaff's team in Madrid was Eileen Egan, of the NCWC.[89] In fact, the Unitarians were not the only ones who were barred from RSARO. In February 1943, the British Quakers' Friends Committee for Refugees and Aliens (FCRA) had already been rejected from sending a FCRA representative to Madrid by Sir Herbert Emerson with a very vague explanation: 'at present the way is not open for British voluntary workers to go to Spain'. It is not clear whether Hayes had anything to do in his decision, or whether the High Commissioner simply

[87] Subak, *Rescue & Flight*, 177.

[88] See the two memoranda by Howard Brooks, 'Memorandum on Inter-Committee Relationships' (7 February 1944); USC, bMS-16004/25(14); and 'Establishment of the Unitarian Service Committee in Spain' (15 March 1944); USC, bMS-16024/1(14). The citation is from the former memorandum.

[89] Conference at JDC New York office (7 December 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Spain: Correspondence and Reports'.

considered the Spanish refugee problem to be the competence of the Americans.[90]

[90] See the minutes of FCRA's general committees (2 February and 2 March 1943); USHMM, RG-59.027M, FCRA/6.

Evacuation from Spain

Concomitant to the admission and release of refugees in Spain was the need —imposed by Francoist authorities— to evacuate all foreigners who fled into Spain within the shortest possible delay. This was indeed the most crucial issue the point of view of the Spanish government. As summarised by the Quaker relief worker Lois Jessup:

> 'The refugee problem from the standpoint of the Spanish authorities is one of evacuation. Their interest and desire is that the refugees continue their journey. On the other hand, they consider the refugee population a possible source of trouble and they are not willing that these refugees be allowed too much liberty while they are in Spain, nor do they want any facilities given to them that would induce or encourage them to delay their departure or seek to establish themselves permanently in Spain or even await here the end of the war'.[91]

There are two main demographics to consider when it comes to emigration from Spain. One comprised Allied nationals of military age and POWs. The other stateless refugees, 90.3 per cent of whom were Jews.[92] Naturally, the former group attracted most of the attention from Washington, London, and Algier's Allied Forces Headquarters (AFHQ). When, on 21 December 1942, ambassador Hayes requested $25,000 for the care of Allied refugees and POWs pouring into Spain across the Pyrenees, the money reached Spain in just five days.[93] That same week, de Gaulle's CFLN also allocated funds for the evacuation of men willing to join the Allied armies. Due to shortage of housing and food in French North Africa, however, the evacuation of refugees 'without military implication' was postponed indefinitely.[94]

To arrange the evacuation of French refugees from Spain —the largest

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[91] Jessup, 'Report from Spain' (19 August 1943); AFSC, Box 6, Folder 'Spain: Correspondence and Reports'.

[92] See detailed statistics compiled by RSARO, accounting for age group, nationality, profession, and religion of 'Stateless refugees in Spain' (1 October 1943); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 916.

[93] Hayes to Hull (21 December 1942); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.

[94] General Eisenhower, AFHQ, Algiers, to General George C. Marshall, US Army Chief of Staff (24 December 1942); TNA, WO-204/4623.

nationality group— the US Embassy established a special section known as 'French Mission' on 30 December. The French Mission was headed by Third Embassy Secretary Niles W. Bond and Lieutenant-Colonel Pierre Malaise, formerly Air Attaché at the French Embassy in Madrid and Henri Giraud's right-hand in the Peninsula.[95] Another key personality in the team of the French Mission was Monsigneur André Boyer-Mas, who headed the French Red Cross (FRC) in Spain. Boyer-Mas had won the favour of Francoist authorities during the Spanish Civil War, when he offered his parish in Puginier (Aude) to shelter several hundred Spanish clergymen who crossed the Pyrenees fleeing anticlerical violence in the Republican zone.[96] Like RSARO, the French Mission also looked after the interests of French refugees through the mediation of the Count of La Granja and the SRC. In October 1943, the French Mission followed the strategy employed by RSARO at the beginning of the year. To facilitate the transit of refugees through the Catalan Pyrenees, the US Consulate-General in Barcelona rented facilities in its vicinity to allow the French Mission to open an office branch in that city under the protection of the US Consul-General.[97]

The evacuation of Allied nationals from Spain was carried out by the US and British embassies in Madrid, with the exception of Dutch and Belgian refugees, who were evacuated by their corresponding governments-in-exile to their respective colonies. The British Embassy was responsible for the embarkation of 'Canadians', Polish, and British refugees via Gibraltar, usually to the United Kingdom.[98] The US Embassy, on the other hand, took care of the evacuation of French nationals —the group that proved most difficult. On 6 March, a first convoy of 1,500 French men of military age was due to sail from the Port of Cádiz bound for Casablanca.[99] Although the evacuation had been

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[95] Hayes to Hull (30 Dec 1942); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.
[96] See Robert Belot, *Aux Frontières de la Liberté: Vichy-Madrid-Alger-Londres; s'Évader de France sous l'Occupation* (Paris: Fayard, 1998), passim.
[97] George A. Makinson, US Consul-General in Barcelona, to US State Department (ca. 30 December 1943); NARA, RG-59, Box 5243.
[98] Hoare to Noel Mason-MacFarlane, Governor of Gibraltar, and FO (11 January 1943); TNA, FO-371/34736/C426.
[99] Andrew Cunningham, Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet, to British Admiralty (23 February 1943); TNA, FO-371/34737/C2165.

approved by Spanish authorities, the Spanish government cancelled the whole operation on the same day that the SS *Sidi Brahim* and SS *Gouverneur-Général Lépine* were scheduled to depart, allegedly due to 'strong pressure from the German ambassador'.[100] In view of the lack of cooperation on the part of the Spanish, the US ambassador consulted with the Portuguese government. On the Morning of 15 March, the Portuguese ambassador to Spain, Pedro Teotónio Pereira, told Hayes that Salazar was 'entirely agreeable' to allow the transit of French refugees through Portugal.[101] The only condition of the Portuguese government was that, in order to avoid 'too much of a display', the French convoys should embark from the more discreet Port of Setúbal, 50 km south of Lisbon. The first group of 784 French refugees for North Africa sailed from Setúbal on 1 April as programmed. According to the Naval Attaché at the British Embassy in Lisbon, the PVDE were 'courteous and helpful to the utmost of their ability'.[102] This operation was repeated several times over the summer and fall of 1943, with each convoy ranging between 619 and 1,165 men.[103] There were also smaller groups of Polish and Czech men between 45 and 92-strong, which sailed from Vila Real de Santo António, a coastal town in south-easternmost Portugal that could be easily reached via ferry from Spanish territory.[104]

On 19 August, Hayes pressed Jordana again to allow French refugees to leave Spain by a Spanish port, as this would simplify the evacuation procedure, in terms of Portuguese transit visas, cost, and transportation. This time, the MAE proved more sympathetic. Madrid agreed on condition that the Allied governments took steps 'to prevent refugees speaking ill of Spain and Spanish

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[100] Hoare to FO (6 March 1943); TNA, FO-371/34737/C2571.
[101] Hayes to Hull (15 March 1943); NARA, RG-59, Box 5246.
[102] E.W.B. Leake, Assistant Naval Attaché at British Embassy in Lisbon, 'Embarkation of French Refugees at Setúbal' (5 May 1943); TNA, FO-371/34742/C5562.
[103] See for instance Campbell to Hoare (26 May 1943); TNA, FO-371/347423/C5983; Campbell to FO (12 June 1943); TNA, FO-371/34744/C6722; Campbell to Hoare (30 June 1943); TNA, FO-371/34745/C7622; Campbell to Hoare (20 August 1943); TNA, FO-371/34747/C9641; and Campbell to FO (30 August 1943); TNA, FO-371/34748/C100082.
[104] See for instance Campbell to Cunningham (5 June 1943); TNA, FO-371/34744/C6686; Campbell to Hoare (28 June 1943); TNA, FO-371/34745/C7527; Capmbell to FO (13 August 1943); TNA, FO-371/34747/C9363; and Campbell to FO (30 August 1943); TNA, FO-371/34748/C10062.

institutions once they have left Spain'.[105] From Hayes' personal notes, it seems that the ambassador agreed to Jordana's petition:

> 'Glad to learn from note just received that Spanish Government consents to direct evacuation of French refugees from Spanish ports in French ships. Deeply grateful —my Government, myself, and the French Mission also. In response to Y.E.'s suggestion, I shall ask our people in Algiers to discourage publicity of any notices, or comments of the refugee inflow to Spain'.[106]

The first convoy of 1,552 French refugees departed from the Port of Málaga on 21 October. To avoid confiscation from Vichy authorities in Spain, the two ships —SS *Sidi Brahim* and SS *Gouverneur-Général Lépine*— sailed under British flag. In November, two more sailings took place from the same port. Over the year 1944, 4,368 POWs joined Allied Armed forces through Spain, according to the British Embassy in Madrid.[107]

Unlike POWs, the evacuation of Jewish refugees from Spain did not receive as much support from the Allied governments, and was handled mostly by non-governmental organisations. In January 1943, the Jewish Agency for Palestine (JAP) began to investigate —upon Schwartz's suggestion— the possibility of evacuating Jewish refugees from the Iberian Peninsula to Palestine.[108] After some deliberation, the project received preliminary approval from both Sir Herbert Emerson and the Foreign Office (FO) in London; and on 19 February, the High Commissioner for Palestine authorised the British Passport Control Office (BPCO) in Lisbon to allocate visas to two hundred 'physically fit workers'.[109] The main challenge to their evacuation was the near lack of transportation possibilities. Due to the war in Tunisia, Mediterranean sailings were unthinkable. The only alternative route to Palestine, through the

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[105] MAE to British Embassy (25 September 1943); TNA, FO-371/34748/C11693; and, Yencken to FO (30 September 1943); TNA, FO-371/34748/C11404.

[106] See Hayes' handwritten note relative to his meeting with minister Jordana (28 September 1943); Hayes Papers, Box 1.

[107] W. W. T. Torr, Military Attaché at the British Embassy in Madrid, to War Office, London, 'Prisoners of War and Refugees in Spain' (14 September 1944); Templewood Papers, XIII:7(31).

[108] M. Shertok, JAP, London, to E. B. Boyd, Colonial Office, London (4 January 1943); TNA, FO-371/36629/W693.

[109] Sir Harold A. MacMichael, High Commissioner of Palestine, to Oliver Stanley, Secretary of State for the Colonies (19 February 1943); TNA, FO-371/36633/W3127.

Atlantic, was also extremely complicated. This route involved sailing around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, to the Port of Lourenço Marques, in the Portuguese colony of Mozambique. From Mozambique, some refugees had managed to reach Palestine by sailing through the Suez Canal to Port Said, in Egypt. Others flew from Durban (South Africa) to Palestine via Cairo and Alexandria. At this stage in the war, however, these means of transport were not easily available.[110] In regards to the hazardous route via Lourenço Marques, the main issue was that the Salazar government was reluctant to issue transit visas for Mozambique without a guarantee that Jewish refugees would leave within the stipulated four weeks —unfortunately, the route through the Nile to Palestine was also fully booked.[111] In an attempt to bypass the Portuguese colony, Whitehall tried to persuade the government of the Union of South Africa to authorise the transit of these refugees through Durban, from whence they could reach Palestine on British troopships. Despite claiming to be 'sympathetic to the cause', however, the South African government refused to allow Jewish refugees in transit arguing that the National Party —then on the opposition— was stoking antisemitism 'as a plank in their election programme'.[112]

To deal with both the issue of transpiration and the screening of refugees, the JAP began an urgent search for a 'special delegate' to the Iberian Peninsula. The person entrusted with this mission was Wilfrid B. Israel, a prominent Anglo-German Jew and philanthropist who had already played an instrumental role in the *Kindertransporte* initiative. During the two months following his arrival to Lisbon on 26 March 1943, Israel examined hundreds of stateless refugees in Portugal and Spain and distributed 200 Palestine certificates.[113] On 1 June, Wilfrid Israel flew to London to negotiate an increase in the number of certificates allocated to the Iberian Peninsula. Tragically, the Dutch KLM plane which carried Israel —as well as Hollywood actor Leslie Howard and several

[110] Wischnitzer, *To Dwell in Safety*, 239
[111] British Embassy in Lisbon to FO (15 April 1943); TNA, FO-371/36635/W5916.
[112] South African Government to Paul Emrys-Evans, Under-Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, London (2 May 1943); TNA, FO-371/36629/W302.
[113] For more details on Israel's mission to the Iberian Peninsula, see Naomi Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel: German Jewry's Secret Ambassador* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1984), 228-50.

British secret agents— was shot down by a German fighter plane as it flew over the Bay of Biscay. Israel's death left both the JAP and the FO without his detailed report on the refugee situation in the Iberian Peninsula, even though most of his suggestions —such as the transportation of refugees through the Mediterranean— were eventually adopted.[114]

Prior to embarking on his last trip, Wilfrid Israel had turned over the completion of this migration work to Dr. Paul Bloch, a German Jewish refugee working for RSARO in Madrid. By September, more than 500 persons were already in possession of Palestine certificates. In October, the JAP sent Fritz Lichtenstein, one of the leaders of the HeHalutz movement in Britain, to take over Israel's role as special delegate in the Iberian Peninsula. In cooperation with JDC, HICEM, and RSARO, Lichtenstein re-examined each migration case, distributed Palestine certificates amongst the refugees, and sought possible transportations solutions.[115] In November 1943, after fruitless negotiations over the route through Lourenço Marques, the Portuguese government agreed to take Jewish refugees to Haifa aboard the SS *Nyassa*, which was due to sail to Kochi (India) to pick up a cargo of coir.[116] The *Nyassa* left the port of Lisbon on 23 January 1944 with 171 Jewish refugees from Portugal, and collected a further group of 567 refugees from Spain at the port of Cádiz. A total of 738 Jewish refugees from the Peninsula reached Haifa on 1 February.[117] With the arrival of the spring in 1944, the number of Jewish refugees who reached Spain thanks to the efforts of the Jewish underground in Southern France increased. Since the majority of them were young Zionists, they awaited the formation of a second convoy to Palestine. On 26 October, a convoy of 308 Jewish refugees sailed from Cádiz aboard the SS *Guinée*, which picked up a further group of 434 Jewish refugees from Tangier before reaching Haifa on 4 November 1944.[118]

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[114] Wilfrid B. Israel, 'Suggestions for a global liquidation of the refugee problem in Spain' (22 May 1943); YIVO, RG-245.6, MKM-20.8, File 58.
[115] For a detailed account of the preparatives for sailing of the SS *Nyassa*, see Perez Leshem (i.e. Fritz Lichsteinstein), 'Rescue Efforts in the Iberian Peninsula', *The Leo Back Institute Year Book* 14:1 (January 1969): 231-256.
[116] Frazer, MoWT, to Henderson, FO (4 November 1943); TNA, FO-371/36645/W15456.
[117] For a nominal list of the 738 refugees who sailed aboard the SS *Nyassa*, see 'Liste complete des personnes parties en Palestine de Cádiz sur SS Nyassa' (undated); YIVO, RG-245.6, MKM-20.18, File 158.
[118] Pilpel to Leavitt (27 October 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 18, File 8.

In addition to Palestine migration, there were a few hundred Jewish refugees who found asylum in Canada. On 17 January 1944, the Canadian government offered Jewish refugees in Spain and Portugal the possibility to shelter full family units for the duration of the war. At the beginning of March 1944, the representative of the Canadian Government, Odillon Cormier, travelled to Lisbon to screen potential immigration candidates. Together with Gwenydd (née Weller) Champsaur, a British volunteer working for the USC office in Lisbon, Cormier toured the cities of Barcelona, Madrid, and Tangiers, to interview prospective migrants. In the meantime, Joseph Schwartz arranged their Portuguese and US transit visas from Lisbon. The immigration conditions demanded by the Canadian government were quite restrictive. There were whole families, for instance, who were rejected simply because they had children older than twenty-one who were unmarried. On 30 March, a first convoy of 201 stateless refugees —132 from the Barcelona area, and 69 from Madrid— sailed aboard the SS *Serpa Pinto* bound bound for Philadelphia.[119] On 14 May, a second convoy of 20 refugees, whose Canadian visas took longer to arrive, left Lisbon on the same route. This convoy endured a very tense moment when a German U-Boat intercepted the *Serpa Pinto* in high seas. Refugees were given half an hour to evacuate the ship while the submarine commandant requested instructions from Berlin as to whether or not to torpedo the ship. After a negative response, the ship continued its way to Philadelphia. In the midst of the chaos, however, a baby and a doctor drowned in the ocean, whereas an aged refugee broke his spine and had to spend months in a hospital upon arrival to Philadelphia.[120] Amongst the 221 refugees who left the Iberian Peninsula in this way, there were fourteen couples whose children had been previously brought to Canada by the USCOM and placed in foster homes in Toronto and Montreal. Upon arrival to the port of Philadelphia, these parents

[119] Conard gives the higher figure of 280 stateless refugees leaving in this group, possibly because there was an additional group of stateless Jews who joined the convoy in Portugal. See Conard's report from AFSC Lisbon (6 November 1944); Conard Papers, Box 1.

[120] For more details on Canadian migration see 'Rapport sur l'Activité à Barcelone de l'American Joint Distribution Committee en 1944' (undated); JDC, Reel 70, Folder 919; and Conard, 'Report on Visit to Spain' (16 October 1944); AFSC, Box 8, Folder 'Portugal: Letters from #852-880 (7 November-14 December 1944)'.

were sent by train to Canada, and managed to be reunited whith their children.[121] The third and last convoy for Canada sailed on 8 September 1944 with 71 Jewish refugees from Central Europe who sailed from Tangier to Canada aboard the SS *Nyassa*.[122] This brings to 292 the total number of Jewish refugees who found refuge in Canada during 1944.[123] In addition to Palestine and Canadian migration, there were also several hundred Jewish refugees who reached North thanks to the Anglo-Saxon negotiations at Bermuda.

[121] Schauffler to Richie (16 June 1944); AFSC, Box 8, Folder 'Portugal: Letters to #183-231 (11 January-31 December 1944)'.

[122] J. Rives Childs, Chargé d'Affaires at US Legation in Tangier, to Stettinius (19 September 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 4, File 23.

[123] Haim Avni gives the figure of 350 refugees accepted to Canada during 1944: Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 122. HICEM Lisbon gives the larger figure of 454 (15 February 1945); YIVO, RG-245.6, MKM-20.2, File 11.

Bermuda, the IGCR, and Fedhala

On 17 December 1942, the Allied governments issued a joint declaration in which they officially acknowledged Nazi atrocities against European Jewry, and condemned Germany's 'bestial policy of cold-blooded extermination'.[124] The shifting balance of power in Europe after the Allied victories in French North Africa, Egypt, and Stalingrad, meant that the Allies were now in a position to invest more energy into tackling the refugee crisis. Indeed, they were urged to do so from various sectors of society. In the weeks that followed the joint declaration, Jewish and Christian organisations in Great Britain and the US organised mass protests pressuring their governments for immediate action to save the Jews of Europe.[125] Whitehall was first to react. On 20 January 1943, the British FO delivered an extensive *aide-mémoire* to the US State Department with the recommendation that the issue of refugees from Nazism 'should be dealt with internationally, instead of as hitherto by private charity or individual governments in isolation'; and calling for a meeting to discuss possible solutions.[126] In late February, after some hesitation, the US government accepted the invitation. The resulting Anglo-American Refugee Conference took place in Bermuda between 19 and 30 April 1943. Discussions at Bermuda centred on two main subjects: the reactivation of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR), and the use of a US military camp in French Morocco —near Fedhala— to guarantee the prompt evacuation of refugees stranded in Franco's Spain.

The London-based IGCR was born out of the Évian Conference in 1938 to provide for the orderly migration of Jews and political refugees from the Reich. During its first four years of existence, however, the IGCR was rather inactive and did not accomplish anything significant despite being supported by twenty-nine signatory states. During the Bermuda negotiations, the British

[124] '11 Allies Condemn Nazi War on Jews: United Nations Issue Joint Declaration of Protest on "Cold-Blooded Extermination"', *The New York Times* (18 December 1942), 1.
[125] Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue*, 174-8, and 190-1.
[126] British Embassy in Washington, Aide-Mémoire for the US Department of State (20 January 1943); Cited in Wischnizter, *To Dwell in Safety*, 245.

delegation deemed this organisation as completely useless, and favoured the creation of an entirely new body to deal with the refugee problem. By contrast, US representatives insisted that rather than establishing a new organisation they should expand and reinvigorate the IGCR —which had been created upon President Roosevelt's initiative. The British acceded to the Americans' request on condition that a new constitution was signed to endow the IGCR with greater powers to overcome the shortcomings of its original mandate. Backed by forty-nine signatory countries, this new constitution empowered the IGCR to rescue, maintain, and distribute relief amongst refugees, negotiate with government authorities in their behalf, and seek long-term arrangements to tackle their needs. Most importantly, the new IGCR would no longer be limited to German and Austrian refugees, as it expanded its mandate 'to all persons, wherever they may be, who, as a result of events in Europe, have had to leave, or may have to leave, their countries of residence because of the danger to their lives or liberties on account of their race, religion or political beliefs'. At least on paper, this was a step towards a broader definition of the term 'refugee', even if it was still restricted to European persons. Heading the IGCR were the League of Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees, Sir Herbert Emerson, and had two vice-directors: Patrick M. Malin, an US citizen, and the Swiss Gustave G. Kullmann.[127]

Despite the good will of those present at Bermuda, there were practical questions regarding the functioning of the IGCR that remained unanswered after the Conference. As it had been the case in its early years of existence, one of the IGCR's main handicaps was financial. In principle, the IGCR was to receive contributions from all signatory states, but the fragile situation in Europe meant that the British and US governments had to underwrite most of the expenses. A further problem, this time relating to the expanded definition of 'refugee', was that persons displaced within their own countries fell outside the IGCR's mandate. But the main obstacle facing the new refugee organisation was the lack of personnel. Although the IGCR's Executive Committee sent IGCR delegates to six key regions —French North Africa, Cairo,

[127] Sjöberg, *The Powers and the Persecuted*, 137-149.

Czechoslovakia, Italy, Switzerland, and the US— it had no plans to significantly expand the organisations' staff. Rather than providing material assistance, however, the job of IGCR representatives was to liaise with the IGCR's headquarters in London, and to cooperate with private relief organisations already in the field to improve relief infrastructures in their respective regions.[128]

In this sense, the success of the IGCR was tied to the ability —and willingness— of IGCR delegates to take advantage of the resources at their disposal. One success story is that of the IGCR's Italian Mission. When Sir Clifford E. Heathcote-Smith was appointed IGCR representative to Italy in May 1944, he enlisted the services of two members of the British Quaker's Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU), as well as two of the most experienced AFSC delegates in North Africa: David Hartley, and Howard Wriggins. These were extremely dedicated relief workers who had long desired to expand their relief missions, and thus profited from IGCR's sponsorship. In his memoirs, Wriggins put it in this way: 'While in Algiers, I had puzzled over how the AFSC was to get a foot in the door in Italy. Here was an unsolicited opportunity … a great stroke of luck'.[129] When the former Governor of French Gabon, Victor Valentin-Smith, was appointed IGCR representative to French North Africa in July 1944, the IGCR's Executive Committee advised him to follow the example of the Italian mission and 'to make use of the Quakers, who have already been on the spot for some months'.[130] Unfortunately, Valentin-Smith refused to follow the Italian example because he saw 'no advantage' in partnering with the AFSC. The way he saw it, the Quaker organisation was on a 'welfare level', and therefore had nothing to do with the mission of the IGCR, which was purely 'diplomatic' in scope. In this context, the first measure as IGCR representative to French North Africa was to close down the Fedhala refugee centre, allegedly, 'to help the refugees at Fedhala camp find new homes in other

[128] Emerson, IGCR, 'Appointment of Representatives in Certain Countries' (29 December 1943); WRB, Part II, Reel 21, File 1.
[129] Howard Wriggins, *Picking up the Pieces from Portugal to Palestine: Quaker Refugee Relief in World War II, a Memoir* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2004), 88.
[130] Patrick M. Malin, IGCR, to Maurice Dejean, CFLN London (4 July 1944); USHMM, RG-67.008M, Series I, Box 7, Folder 29.

parts of the world'. Rather than effectively using his IGCR role to assist refugees, Valentin-Smith seemed more interested in using that position to get rid of the refugees, as his superiors at the French Provisional Government feared being left with this burden at the end of the war. Ultimately, Washington refused to close the refugee camp at Fedhala, as this was the product of Anglo-American cooperation and not the IGCR's competence. As to the benefit that the IGCR representative brought to the refugee situation in the North African region, there is no best assessment than that of AFSC representative in Casablanca, Kendall G. Kimberland: 'we have virtually been put on notice by Valentin to expect little or nothing from him in the way of cooperation, much less support'.[131]

Given that the 'reinvigoration' of the IGCR failed to improve its operating capacity to the extent desired, the IGCR remained mostly concerned with policy making and negotiation, and left actual relief operations to private relief organisations and to another supranational relief organisation. Created to assist the peoples and countries devastated by Axis powers, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was a product of the war itself. The first to suggest the creation of an international relief organisation to assist the victims of Nazi expansionism was Winston Churchill. On 21 August 1940, during a speech at the House of Commons regarding the blockade of Germany, the British premier attempted to strengthen the hopes of those under the Nazi yoke by promising them 'immediate food, freedom, and peace' as soon as the Axis powers had been defeated.[132] Negotiations in this sense moved slowly over the next two years. On 24 September 1941, the British government convened a meeting with representatives of fifteen Allied governments at St. James's Palace in London to discuss postwar relief plans for Europe. At this meeting, the Allied governments approved Anthony Eden's proposal to begin inter-Allied cooperation on relief matters. In June 1942, Argentina, Australia, Canada, Great Britain, and the US, established the International Wheat Council, which

[131] Valentin-Smith is quoted in Kimberland to AFSC Philadelphia (29 August 1944); USHMM, RG-67.008M, Series I, Box 7, Folder 29.
[132] George Woodbridge, *UNRRA: The History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (Vol. I; New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), 7-14. Citation is in 8.

was to administer a wheat pool for intergovernmental relief in war-stricken countries. Although the Allies agreed to establish UNRRA in August 1942, the unfavourable war situation made it necessary to defer these plans indefinitely. Negotiations were resumed in January 1943, and in May, the 'Big Four' drafted a preliminary agreement that was released to the other forty Allied governments to be revised over the summer. On 9 November 1943, representatives from forty-four countries convened at the White House to sign the constitution establishing the UNRRA, whose primary goals were to provide relief to suffering persons following the liberation of Nazi-occupied territories, and to arrange for the return of prisoners and exiles to their homes. The following day, the UNRRA held its first council session in Atlantic City (New Jersey).

The second major issue covered at the Bermuda Conference —which was to be the source of even greater controversy between British and American officials— related to the refugee situation in Franco's Spain. On 22 April 1943, the British delegation presented Francoist Spain as 'the only effective channel of escape remaining in Western Europe', and argued that the transfer of Jewish refugees to French North Africa was essential to ensure that Spain would not close her borders altogether —as it happened the month before. Would this channel be blocked, so argued the British delegation, the Allies would not only face international criticism for their passivity in the refuge crisis; they would also lose an essential supply of manpower. But these persuasive arguments were not enough to convince the US delegation, who insisted that North Africa was a military priority.[133] In truth, North Africa was not the only possibility of asylum for Jewish refugees in Spain. In December 1942, Sir Herbert Emerson had already investigated the possibility of transferring Jewish refugees from Spain to Jamaica's 'Gibraltar Camp No. 2', a refugee camp established in 1940 to accommodate up to 7,000 evacuees from the British Crown Colony of Gibraltar, and which was barely in use. In view of the American opposition to the use of North Africa during the Bermuda negotiations, the British government considered Jamaica as a last-resort solution to the refugee problem

[133] British Delegation at Refugee Conference in Bermuda, to FO and Washington (22 April 1943); TNA, CO-323/1846/8.

in Spain, although one that was never implemented.[134]

The American refusal to the use of French North Africa as a Jewish refugee depot was driven by a fear of jeopardising the Allies' fragile relations with French authorities in North Africa, whose position on the Jewish question was well known to the Americans.[135] Through informal discussions with François Darlan and other French officials, Robert D. Murphy had learnt that they opposed any 'sensational steps to improve the lot of the Jews' as they believed that this would inevitably provoke a violent reaction from local Muslims.[136] President Roosevelt was equally reluctant to sanction this project following his exchanges with Resident-General Charles Noguès, who commented during the Casablanca Conference of January 1943 that 'it would be a sad thing for the French to win the war merely to open the way for the Jews to control the professions and the business world of North Africa'.[137]

Unsatisfied with the refusal of the American delegation, the British FO pressured the US Government to rethink its position over the establishment of the so-called North African Refugee Centre (NARC), to which Anthony Eden 'attaches very great importance'.[138] After some deliberation, the US State Department and the Combined Chiefs of Staff gave their preliminary approval to the NARC project, but the US Joint Chiefs of Staff remained adamant in their military security objections. Churchill raised this question informally with President Roosevelt in mid-May 1943, on the occasion of the Third Washington Conference ('Trident'), although to no avail.[139] On 30 June,

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[134] See A. W. G. Randall, FO to P. Rogers, Colonial Office (4 December 1942), and Hoare to FO (10 November 1943); TNA, CO-323/1846/7 and /8 respectively.

[135] On 10 November 1942, the Allies reached an agreement with commander-in-chief François Darlan to put an end to French resistance. In exchange for his recognition as High Commissioner for French North and West Africa, Darlan ordered all French forces to cooperate with the Allies and severed ties with the Vichy government. This fragile alliance, however, did not count with the support of General Charles de Gaulle and his Free French Forces, who felt betrayed by the Anglo-Saxon Allies. See Arthur L. Funk, 'Negotiating the "Deal with Darlan"', *Journal of Contemporary History* 8:2 (April 1973), 81-117.

[136] General Eisenhower, AFHQ, Algiers, to General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff (5 December 1942); TNA, WO-204/4623.

[137] See Document 349: Conversation between Roosevelt and Noguès (17 January 1943), in *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Washington, 1941-1942, and Casablanca, 1943* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1958), 608-9.

[138] War Cabinet, Chiefs of Staff Committee 'Refugees from Spain' (26 April 1943); TNA, CAB-80/40/37.

[139] FO to Harold Macmillan, Minister Resident in Algiers (10 June 1943); TNA, CO-

Churchill cabled the US President insisting that the NARC was 'the most practical solution' to alleviate the plight of Jewish refugees in the Iberian Peninsula, and added that General Giraud had given his —and therefore the recently constituted CFLN's— general approval.[140] Roosevelt gave green light to the NARC project on 8 July, and two days later reached an agreement with Churchill. Whereas the US Embassy in Spain was to assembly and transport the refugees to the Spanish port of embarkation; the British Government was to provide shipping transportation over the Strait of Gibraltar to North Africa. On 17 July 1943, the President's Emergency Fund transferred $500,000 to OFRRO in Algiers to defray expenses for the project. Eisenhower and Giraud, on the other hand, had been charged with the task of designating a suitable location for the NARC in French Morocco. On 10 August, they proposed the Camp Maréchal Lyautey in Fedhala, situated ten miles north of Casablanca.[141]

Despite their initial ratification of the project, French officials imposed several conditions that effectively delayed the realisation of the NARC for several months. In addition to capping at 2,000 the number of Jewish evacuees from Spain that could be sheltered in French North Africa at any one time, French authorities also demanded the imposition of internment conditions upon the refugees, who would not be able to leave nor work outside the camp under any circumstance.[142] Although US authorities agreed to the former condition, they strongly objected to the latter. In their view, freedom of movement was essential to avoid the implication that the Allies were running a concentration camp with Jewish prisoners. In their response, the French clarified that it was not their intention to deprive refugees of their liberty, but solely to take precautions with refugees whose background was unknown to them. In regards to the refugee's capacity to work, French authorities agreed to the granting of working permits to Fedhala refugees after examination of each case, and as long as it did not cause disadvantage to the local economy.

323/1846/8.

[140] Churchill to Roosevelt (30 June 1943); WRB, Part I, Reel 25, File 7.

[141] F. Richard Wolff, UNRRA, to Dewey Anderson, UNRRA (11 January 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 11, File 3.

[142] Joseph H. Murphy, 'Relief and Evacuation Projects for Refugees in European Countries' (16 February 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 25, File 7.

Refugees without working permits, however, would not be allowed to leave the camp —which would be safeguarded by French military guards— under any circumstance.[143] The final agreement was reached on 6 December during a meeting between the representatives of all parties involved: the maintenance of the NARC would be the shared responsibility of the US and British governments, the newly-established UNRRA would provide the camp's personnel, and the IGCR would be responsible for organising the eventual removal of the refugees from Fedhala. The preliminary screening of refugees in Spain was to be carried out by an UNRRA representative against a security check by French authorities upon arrival to North Africa. After nearly eight months, the preparatives for Fedhala had concluded.[144]

In early January 1944, UNRRA representative and director of the NARC, Moses W. Beckelman, travelled to Spain to publicise this evacuation plan amongst Jewish refugees, and conduct the preliminary screening process. To his surprise, the number of Jewish refugees remaining in Spain at that time did not exceed 1,500. Moreover, 567 of these were in possession of Palestine certificates and were expected to sail to Haifa on 25 January. Since Fedhala was in closer proximity to Europe and could have tempted refugees in this group to withdraw from migration to Palestine, Beckelman postponed the official announcement of the NARC project until the day of their departure.[145] Meanwhile, Beckelman gave refugees in Madrid a rough idea of what living conditions they could expect at the camp, and the advantages and disadvantages of the project. The official announcement with details on the NARC project was distributed at the end of January.[146] Beckelman said that the two questions most frequently asked by prospective refugees were 'Can I get a job?' and 'How can I arrange to live outside the camp?'. To this he answered that the only way to permanently move out of the NARC was to join the French

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[143] See Robert D. Murphy to René Massigli, CFLN's Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, Algiers (18 October 1943), and Massigli's response (9 November 1943); WRB, Part II, Reel 11, File 4
[144] Hugh R. Wilson, US Office of Strategic Services, to Hull (6 December 1943); NARA, RG-59, Box 1284, Reel 37.
[145] Moses W. Beckelman, Director of NARC, from US Embassy in Madrid, to Fryer, UNRRA Chief of Mission, Algiers (23 January 1944); JDC, Reel 70, Folder 917.
[146] A copy of this multilingual 'Announcement', which was distributed in English, French, Spanish, and German, can be found in JDC, Reel 1, Folder 434.

Foreign Legion, a solution which was not popular amongst refugees considering the treatment previously accorded to Jewish volunteers. But most of all, they were most apprehensive about travelling to North Africa to be confined to a 'camp' —itself a word that was enough to provoke terrible memories.[147] To compensate for the low reception of the Fedhala project, Beckelman pressed for the admission of a group of 365 Sephardic Jews of Spanish nationality whose arrival to Spain was due in mid-February 1944. Their 'repatriation' from Bergen-Belsen had been previously obtained by RSARO from the Spanish government on condition that these Sephardim would leave Spain within the shortest possible delay. Accordingly, Beckelman accompanied Samuel Sequerra to the Franco-Spanish border at Portbou to greet this group of refugees and screen their applications to Fedhala.[148] Two additional groups of 75 Spanish Sephardim and 56 Portuguese Sephardim 'repatriated' from France under similar circumstances were also penciled for migration to Fedhala.[149]

Before their actual sailing to North Africa took place, refugee applications still had to undergo a security check by French authorities in Algiers which further delayed the whole operation. In addition to rejecting 76 refugee-candidates on security grounds, the French also objected to the admission of 160 Sephardic Jews who had arrived in Spain prior to March 1933 and were in possession of Spanish passports. This added to the impatience of Spanish authorities, who threatened to discontinue the arrival of other groups of Sephardim from Nazi-occupied Europe until all foreign-born Sephardic Jews with Spanish nationality had been removed from Spain.[150] After much pressure from Leonard E. Ackermann, the WRB's special representative in French North Africa, French authorities agreed to admit nearly a hundred Sephardic

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[147] Beckelman, UNRRA, from US Consulate Barcelona to Dewey Anderson, UNRRA Chief of Field Operations, Washington DC (12 February 1944); WRB, Part, I, Reel 1, File 2.
[148] The group of 365 Spanish Sephardim from Bergen-Belsen reached Portbou on two train convoys of 182 and 183 people each, on 10 and 13 February 1944 respectively.
[149] 'Rapport sur l'Activité à Barcelone de l'American Joint Distribution Committee en 1944' (undated); JDC, Reel 70, Folder 919.
[150] See John Pehle, 'Developments during the week of March 20-25, 1944' (25 March 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 26, File 1; and Leonard E. Ackermann, 'Report on North African Refugee Center at Fedhala' (20 April 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel, 11, File 2.

refugees regardless of their date of arrival to Spain.[151] In addition to these screening complications, the Fedhala project was also deferred by the scarcity of available shipping space. Since the British argued that they were unable to secure a ship to transport Jewish refugees across the strait of Gibraltar, the French proposed sending one of their vessels.[152] But the promised ship was not available, as it was undergoing reparations at the Casablanca harbour that would take at least four more weeks.[153] The sailing was postponed two additional times, causing growing skepticism on the part of refugees.[154] At last, on 21 June 1944, the first convoy of 573 Jewish refugees sailed from Cádiz to Fedhala aboard the SS *Gouverneur-Général Lépine* —this was the first French ship to berth at a Spanish port since 'Operation Torch'.[155]

The 'Camp Maréchal Lyautey' at Fedhala had been built at the beginning of 1943 by the US Army, but left unfinished. It consisted of twenty-eight buildings of stone with timber and felt roofs, ridge ventilators, and about 25 showers and sinks made of concrete. Despite being surrounded by a barbed-wire fence and guarded by former Italian POWs now working for the US Army, Fedhala was not a 'camp' but a 'refugee centre'. Refugees at Fedhala were referred to as 'residents' by twenty staff members that included several clerks and relief workers, three nurses, a doctor, an educator, and a military engineer. Fedhala had a library, a school, a canteen, and a 'recreation hall' with a large central fireplace, bulletin boards, and a piano. Jewish religious services were organised regularly by the several hundred Sephardim at Fedhala —the largest demographic at the NARC. In the evening hours, a terrace from which the ocean and the setting sun could be seen through the barbed wire was particularly popular amongst the residents.[156] Overall, refugees seemed quite

[151] Leonard E. Ackerman, WRB Special Representative to French North Africa, to John Pehle, WRB Executive Director (3 May 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 2, File 1.
[152] Leonard E. Ackermann, 'Report on North African Refugee Center at Fedhala' (20 April 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel, 11, File 2.
[153] Ackermann to Pehle (24 April 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 1, File 2.
[154] Ackermann to WRB, via Chapin, Algiers, to Edward Stettinius Jr., Acting Secretary of State (28 May 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 11, File 2.
[155] 'Liste des Étrangers Apatrides qui se sont Embarqués a Cádiz le 21 Juin 1944 sur le SS "Gouverneur Lepine" pour l'Afrique du Nord (Camp de Fedhala)' (26 June 1944); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/6.
[156] See the detailed reports by Eveline Q. Cadbury, a nurse working for the British branch of the Quakers, the Friends Relief Committee (FRS), 'Casablanca [Fedhala] First Report' (31 January

positive about their experience at the NARC. Raymonde Tauber, a Fedhala resident, said that she felt like in 'heaven'.[157] René Hassid, '*chef de group*' of the first convoy to sail to North Africa, reported at the end of his first week at Fedhala:

> 'Unmarried and people alone live in well built barracks, and each family lives under a pretty large tent furnished with the necessary beds. We have been given a mess-kit and take our meals at the mess. The food is good and we get plenty of it. We stand up at 7, breakfast at 8, lunch at 1pm and have dinner at 6pm. At 11 pm every light is put out. Barracks have the electric light and each tent a petrol lamp. There is a recreational hall where people spend their time specially after dinner. The medical care is assured by a doctor and the health situation of the camp seems be excellent'.[158]

Rather than distributing cash allowances indiscriminately, camp authorities encouraged Fedhala residents to work towards any aspect of camp organisation —e.g. cleaning, plumbing, cooking, carpentry— and were given a salary at the end of every week in reward for their work. This was of course deliberate, as for many refugees this was their first working experience in years. René Hassid shared that opinion:

> 'This is a subtle and generous way to make the residents forget they are relieved, we may only regret that sometimes some residents forget it almost too much, and complain or discuss about supplementary hours, wages, etc. But a psychologist may qualify this too as a good sign of recovery'.[159]

Despite the fact that Fedhala could welcome up to 2,000 refugees at any given point, only 1,397 refugees from Spain ever applied for admission. Of this total, 977 candidates passed the double screening —70 per cent of the total— and yet the number of refugees who ever reached Fedhala was just 634 —45 per cent of original

1944); USHMM, RG-67.008M, Series I, Box 11, Folder 105; and Mordecai Kessler, from the JDC, 'Report after a visit to UNRRA NARC' (1 August 1944); USHMM, RG-68.066M, Reel 38, GII/327/1.

[157] See VHA, No. 2934, Interview with Raymonde Tauber.

[158] Hassid to Blickenstaff (30 June 1944); YIVO, RG-245.6, MKM-20.17, File 151

[159] René Hassid, 'chef de group', to Blickenstaff, RSARO (3 September); USHMM, RG-67.008M, Series I, Box 10, Folder 68.

applicants.[160] This discrepancy is due to three main reasons: the Spanish authorities' refusal to release certain refugees, refugees being able to arrange their emigration to other countries, and the bad state of health of some amongst them.[161] On the brighter side, Fedhala did host refugees who did not come from the Iberian Peninsula. The most numerous was a convoy of 150 Libyan refugees who had been the object of a German-British prisoner exchange in Lisbon and awaited repatriation to Benghazi.[162] If we take into account these arrivals, the number of refugees who ever set foot in the NARC at Fedhala amounts to 853, a number considerably below the camp's shelter potential.[163]

After the liberation of France in August 1944, Fedhala lost its *raison d'être*, and camp authorities began to seek ways to liquidate the refugee centre —whose high maintenance was no longer justified. In fact, IGCR representative in Algiers, Victor Valentin-Smith, had been pressing for the liquidation of the NARC since July, a decision which IGCR director Sir Herbert Emerson judged premature.[164] The first large groups of Fedhala residents departed in October. On 13 October, 348 Sephardim were transferred to the UNRRA camp in Nuseirat, in British Palestine, by way of Algiers, Naples, Tarento, Benghazi, and Alexandria.[165] Other refugees were relocated to UNRRA refugee camps in Italy, while others remained in Casablanca awaiting migration to the US.[166] On 20 October 1944, UNRRA assumed responsibility for the so-called 'Yugoslav Refugee Camp' in Philippeville (Algeria), and on 15 November, 234 Fedhala residents were transferred to that camp.[167] The same day this group left for Philippeville, the Fedhala camp was liquidated.[168] At the close of 1944, a total of 1,893

[160] In addition to the 573 Jewish refugees who sailed on 21 June from Cádiz, there were two groups of 37 and 22 Fedhala refugees (7 May and 3 July respectively) who were 'sandwiched in' among French evacuees evacuated by the CFLN to North Africa. See Colonel H. V. Roberts, to Stettinius (6 May 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 11, File 4.
[161] Blickenstaff, 'Evacuation of Stateless Refugees to North Africa' (27 December 1944); USC, bMS-16007/2(2).
[162] Up to 1,000 Libyan Jews from Tripoli and Benghazi had been forced to migrate during Axis occupation. See Schwartz, 'Note on Tripolitanian Refugees in Tunisia and Algeria' (18 July 1943); JDC, Reel 1, Folder 434.
[163] UNRRA-NARC, "Tableau Récapitulatif des Arrivées et Departs" (23 November 1944); USHMM, RG-68.066M, GII/327/1.
[164] Winant to Stettinius (17 July 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 10, File 2; and Hull to Norweb (21 July 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 10, File.
[165] Weatherford, to J. Barclay Jones, AFSC Commissioner, Algiers (13 October 1944); USHMM, RG-67.008M, Series I, Box 8, Folder 36.
[166] For more details on departures, see UNRRA-NARC, 'Tableau Recapitulatif des Arrivées et Departs' (23 Novembre 1944); USHMM, RG-68.066M, GII/327/1.
[167] Philippeville is known today by its Arabic name: Skikda.
[168] Kimberland to Valentin-Smith (16 November 1944); USHMM, RG-67.008M, Series I, Box

Jewish refugees had been evacuated from Spain thanks to the combined efforts of RSARO, JDC, UNRRA, and the Allied governments. Whilst the majority went to Palestine (889), Fedhala (634), and Canada (292), some refugees managed to migrate to the US (23), Argentina (18), and the United Kingdom (12), as well as several countries in Latin America (25).[169]

7, Folder 29.

[169] RSARO, 'Spain: Activities of the Madrid Office during 1944' (28 February 1945); USC, bMs-16007/2(2)

Chapter Five:

Rescue Against the Clock, 1943-44

Repatriation and Deportation

Following the onset of the mass arrests of Jewish persons in occupied France during the spring of 1941, and especially after the implementation of the 'Final Solution', the Nazi Government was faced with the question of what to do with Jews living in German-controlled territories who claimed to be citizens of neutral countries and countries aligned with Nazi Germany. Although the SS resisted to exempt these Jews from deportation to the extermination camps in the East, the position of the *Auswärtiges Amt* prevailed. At this point in the war, the Germans could simply not risk ruining their diplomatic relations with both the neutrals and their allies, as this would severely weaken Germany's strategic and foreign trade interests. Accordingly, it was agreed that Jews of neutral nationality at the transit camps at Drancy and Compiègne would be released once the relevant consular officials confirmed that they were citizens from a neutral or German-allied country. These Jews were exempted from various other anti-Jewish measures such as the requirement to bear the yellow star —becoming 'non-star-bearers' (*Nicht-Sternträger*) in Nazi parlance— meaning that they were not to be arrested and deported, or at least not yet.[1]

In an act of 'diplomatic deference', the Nazi government consulted the governments of neutral and German-allied countries on whether they considered these Jews as rightful citizens and were thus willing to repatriate them home in the context of the so-called *Heimschaffungsaktion* ('repatriation action'). If not, these persons would have to endure to the 'general Jewish measures' (*allgemeine Judenmaßnahmen*), namely, arrest, deportation, and murder. In so doing, Berlin shifted the burden of responsibility for the fate of these persons to third-party governments under a false pretence of diplomatic respect and right-doing, and made them passive accomplices in the murder of these persons —unless they agreed to repatriate their Jewish nationals.[2]

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[1] Corry Guttstadt, 'Origins of the 1942–1943 German Ultimatum on the Repatriation of Jews with Citizenship of Neutral and German-Allied Countries', in Guttstadt, et al., *Bystanders, Rescuers or Perpetrators?*, 140-1

[2] Rainer Schulze, 'The Heimschaffungsaktion of 1942-43: Turkey, Spain and Portugal and their Responses to the German Offer of Repatriation of their Jewish Citizens', *Holocaust Studies* 18:2-

From September 1942, Germany began to distribute among allied and neutral governments an ultimatum for the repatriation of their Jewish citizens from occupied France. The two fascist puppet states of Croatia and Slovakia, as well as Germany's allies, Bulgaria, Romania, and Italy, all agreed to the application of the 'general Jewish measures' to their Jewish nationals in France. In October, the German ultimatum for repatriation reached the governments of Hungary, Switzerland, and Turkey. In early 1943, the ultimatum was extended to Denmark, Finland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and several South American countries. Although initially these ultimata concerned only Jews in France, their scope was later extended to include all territories under German control in Western, Central Europe, and Greece.[3]

The German ultimatum for the repatriation of Spanish and Portuguese Jews from German-occupied Europe arrived in Madrid and Lisbon on 26 January and 4 February 1943 respectively. In principle, they were given three months to repatriate their Jewish nationals. Owing to widespread censorship in Spain and Portugal, public opinion in these two countries exerted minimal pressure over their respective governments and thus were not in a position to demand the repatriation of their Jewish co-nationals. By contrast, mounting pressure from the Allied governments put considerable pressure on the two Iberian regimes, who could not ignore the fate of their Jewish subjects abroad without risking their 'image' in the West. However, even if Salazar's Portugal and Franco's Spain did eventually engage in negotiations for the repatriation of their Jewish nationals abroad, neither of the two governments considered them to be citizens in full right.

Since the late nineteenth century, a number of intellectuals in Spain and Portugal began to take interest in the descendants of Sephardic Jews who had been expelled from the Iberian Peninsula four centuries before. This movement was stronger in Spain than in Portugal, owing to the fact that Spain was going through a deep identity crisis which resulted from the loss of its last colonial possessions —Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines— in 1898 following a

3 (2012): 50-1. See also, Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto,* 195-7.
[3] Guttstadt, 'Origins of the 1942-1943 German Ultimatum', 141-3.

humiliating defeat against the US. Amongst the many responses presented to make up for such grave national depression, was the so-called philosephardism (*filosefardismo*). Its pioneer was Dr. Ángel Pulido, a physician and liberal politician who became a great advocate of Judeo-Spanish language and Sephardic tradition. Pulido's first encounter with the Sephardic diaspora took place during a trip to the Danube countries in the summer of 1880. Pulido was greatly impressed to find Spanish-speaking Jews amongst the Jewish communities of Serbia, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Turkey, whom he called 'Spaniards without homeland' (*Españoles sin patria*). Following a second trip in 1904, Pulido started a campaign to repair the centuries-old divide between Spain and Spanish Jews in diaspora.[4] Propelled more by his patriotism than by his philosemitism, Pulido's campaign highlighted the economic and cultural potential of a rapprochement with these communities, and achieved relative success among Spain's educated classes. In 1909, he was authorised to open synagogues in Spain, and the following year he obtained the king's patronage to establish the *Unión Hispano-Hebrea*. This was an organ of cultural diplomacy similar to the French *Alliance Israelite Universelle*, which successfully established itself in the Balkans and the Spanish Protectorate in Morocco. Pulido's campaign also triggered the interest of Spanish academia in Jewish studies more broadly.[5]

During the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, the Spanish and Portuguese interest in the Sephardic communities of the Balkan region became a way to increase the influence of their countries in the Balkan region. In 1912, the Greeks occupied Salonika, ending the Ottoman's system of capitulations which thus far had allowed European powers to protect subjects under Ottoman rule. Salonikan Jews numbered about 80,000 at the beginning of the twentieth

[4] See for instance Ángel Pulido Fernández, *Los Israelitas Españoles y el Idioma Castellano* (Madrid: Sucesores de Rivadeneyra, 1904); and *Españoles sin Patria y la Raza Sefardí* (Madrid: E. Teodoro, 1905).

[5] See Julio Caro Baroja, *Los Judíos en la España Moderna y Contemporáne*a (Vol. 3. Madrid: Istmo, 1978), 221-4; González, *Los Judíos y la Segunda República,* 59-69; and Bernd Rother, 'España y los Judíos: de los Albores del Siglo XX a la Guerra Civil', in Uriel Macías, et al. (eds.), *Los Judíos en la España Contemporánea: Historia y Visiones, 1898-1998* (Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2000), 153-6.

century out of a total population of 173,000.[6] To defend themselves from the incipient process of 'Hellenization' imposed by the Greek occupiers, many Jews who had thus far been Spain's and Portugal's protégés sought again their consular protection. From 1912, Portugal's liberal First Republic granted Portuguese nationality to virtually all those who sought their consular protection.[7] Spanish authorities were initially more reluctant to grant diplomatic protection to these Sephardim. It was only after the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 abolished the system of capitulations in Turkey that the Spanish government granted Spanish nationality to its former protégés under Ottoman rule. As seen from Miguel Primo de Rivera's military dictatorship, this was also a way to expand Spanish influence in the region. The resulting piece of legislation was the Royal Decree of 20 December 1924, which granted the former Spanish protégés in the Ottoman empire the possibility of becoming Spanish nationals. Although Spanish authorities instructed their diplomatic legations in the region to give maximum publicity to this decree, many Sephardim did not abide themselves by the decree because they thought that their origins rendered them Spanish citizens automatically. Only between 3,000 to 4,000 Sephardim did receive Spanish nationality. Some migrated to Spain, but the majority remained in the Balkans or moved to France.[8]

To a great extent, the responses of Salazarist Portugal and Francoist Spain to the German ultimatum for repatriation of 1943 resemble one another —and not in a positive way. Both governments opposed the settlement of their Jewish nationals within their borders despite being aware of what awaited these persons. Both approached the German ultimatum in purely legalistic terms. Both used red tape to delay and hinder the repatriation of their Jewish nationals whenever possible. By choosing not to adopt a more proactive stance with Nazi Germany as regards rescue, Spain and Portugal failed to save hundreds if not thousands of Jewish lives.

By early 1943, there were a maximum of 300 Portuguese Jews in France

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[6] Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 28.
[7] Milgram, *Portugal, Salazar e os Judeus*, 225-35.
[8] See Joseph Pérez, *Los Judíos en España* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2005), 308-10; and Rohr, *The Spanish Right and the Jews*, 26-7.

who were registered with the Portuguese Consulate-General in Paris. Despite initial reluctance to intervene in their behalf, Salazar changed his mind as the repatriation deadline of 31 March approached. From the 300, at least 184 were repatriated in three groups that reachced Portugal in September and November 1943, and in June 1944. In Greece, there were only six Jews holding Portuguese citizenship according to Nazi figures. But the number of Jews registered with the Portuguese consulate was at least fifteen. In this instance, the Portuguese government did not engage in negotiations to effect their repatriation to Portugal and left them to their fate.[9] The largest group of Jews of Portuguese extraction —numbering 4,303— lived in the Netherlands. This is the most tragic side to the Portuguese side of the story. Since none of them held Portuguese citizenship proper, the Portuguese government did nothing to protect them despite many appeals from the Amsterdam Jewish Community. In a desperate attempt to avoid deportation, Dutch Sephardim engaged in Nazi pseudoscientific racial discourse, and tried to convince German officials that they belonged to an entirely different 'race' than the 'Jewish' one. The thesis of the so-called '*Action Portuguesia*' was built on the long-standing myth of Sephardic 'racial superiority' over the Ashkenazim. Dutch Jews of Portuguese extraction attempted to demonstrate this centuries-old pseudoscientific theory using all sorts of genealogical, cultural, physical-anthropological, linguistic, and psychological 'evidence'. Unfortunately, Nazi Germany rejected these rationales after careful consideration by Wilfried Euler, the 'Superintendent for Jewish Racial Issues' at the Reich's New Historical Institute (*Reichsinstitut für Geschichte des neuen Deutschlands*).[10] From the 4,303 Jews of Portuguese origin who lived in the Netherlands at the beginning of the war, only 500 survived the Holocaust.[11]

Spanish attitudes towards its Jewish colony abroad were dominated by the government's determination to avoid any Jewish settlement in Spain, and

[9] Milgram, *Salazar, Portugal, and the Jews,* 235-60.
[10] Jaap Cohen, 'The Action Portuguesia: Legitimizing National-Socialist Racial Ideology as a Dutch Sephardic Strategy for Safety, 1941–1944', in David J. Wertheim (ed.), *The Jew as Legitimation: Jewish-Gentile Relations Beyond Antisemitism and Philosemitism* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 153-171.
[11] Milgram, *Salazar, Portugal, and the Jews,* 252.

fear to disagree with Nazi Jewish policy. In November 1940, following the introduction of the first antisemitic measures in France, MAE Serrano Súñer instructed its ambassador in Vichy 'not to obstruct the application of these measures, keeping a passive attitude'.[12] Similarly, when Nazi Germany sent the repatriation ultimatum to Madrid, the Franco government's first reaction was to suggest the transfer of Spanish Jews to 'their countries of origin', such as Greece and Turkey. But the German ambassador to Spain rejected this suggestion and insisted that the only option available were their repatriation to Spain, or their being subjected to general anti-Jewish measures. After two months of hesitation, Madrid accepted to repatriate Spanish Jews while developing red-tape obstacles to keep this number to a minimum. In this regard, Madrid interpreted the law in the strictest possible sense. Only those persons who had obtained Spanish nationality by virtue of the 1924 Royal Decree and had registered themselves —and their relatives— in the civil registry at a Spanish consulate abroad were to be considered Spanish. Those who had obtained Spanish nationality and were in possession of a Spanish passport but had failed to enter their names in the civil registry were not to be considered Spanish, and were left to their own fate.[13] The attitude of the MAE was blatantly cynical. On the one hand, the MAE's General Director of Foreign Policy, José María Doussinague, considered it 'not advisable to claim before German authorities that because these Sephardim have Spanish nationality they are of the same condition than persons born in Spain'. On the other hand, the second-highest ranking official at the MAE also instructed Spanish diplomats abroad to make sure that the assets belonging to these persons —in this instance, referred to as 'Spaniards'— are protected from the Germans, 'since, in a way, they form part of Spanish national patrimony'.[14]

But the MAE was not unaware of the negative consequences that inaction

[12] MAE, Telegram No. 637 to Spanish Embassy in Vichy (9 November 1940); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/2.

[13] Diego Buigas de Dalmau, Spanish Consul-General in Paris, Ginés Vidal y Saura, Spanish Ambassador in Berlin (29 April 1943); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/2.

[14] José María Doussinague, General Director of Foreign Policy at MAE, 'Instrucciones a los Representantes de España en Europa sobre trato a los Sefarditas' (Madrid, 18 January 1943); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/2.

over this issue would bring for Spain. The Franco government was being faced with a 'grave dilemma'. On the one hand, the abandonment of the Spanish Sephardim in Western Europe represented for the Franco government could 'aggravate the hostilities that exist against us already —particularly in America— and we run the risk of being accused of executioners or murder accomplices, as they have done in the past'. On the other hand, the possibility of repatriating these Sephardim to Spain was not out of the question, since 'their race, their money, their anglophilia, and their Freemasonry makes them likely to all sorts of intrigue'.[15] In view of the pressure from RSARO, JDC, and the AFSC, and their willingness to cooperate on this respect, however, the Franco government agreed to repatriate small groups of Spanish Jews from France on condition that the relief committees took care of the whole cost of their repatriation, as well as their prompt evacuation from Spain. In fact, the repatriation of further groups of Jewish refugees would only be allowed, according to the policy of the Franco government, after the previous group had left Spain. The idea was, as minister Jordana put it, that these Sephardim were to pass through Spain 'like light goes through glass, leaving no trace'.[16]

The first convoy of 79 Spanish Jews from France reached Spain on 11 August 1943. A week before, the Spanish government had celebrated a council of ministers during which Francoist officials had preemptively agreed to hinder the arrival of further groups of Jews by putting the blame on relief organisations whenever these were not able to effect their prompt evacuation from Spain. As explained by José Doussinague, any delays in the repatriation of these persons from Spain would be responsibility of the relief organisations: 'for as long as it takes them to remove these Sephardim from Spain, the rest will remain in the concentration camps'.[17] Indeed, when RSARO requested the entry into Spain of a second group of Spanish Sephardim from France on 25 August 1943, the Spanish government responded that this would not be possible until the

[15] Doussinague, 'Retirada de Sefarditas Españoles de Francia, Bélgica y Holanda' (28 January 1943); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/2.
[16] Jordana, MAE, to General Carlos Asensio, Minister of War (28 December 1943); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/3.
[17] Doussinague to Germán Baraibar, MAE, European Section (5 August 1943); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/3.

previous convoy of 79 had been evacuated from Spain.[18] In some cases, Francoist delaying tactics deliberately obstructed their emigration, for example, by demanding that young male Sephardic repatriates were compelled to do military service while in Spain, even though they were not considered Spaniards in full right.[19] When the evacuation of the first convoy of Sephardim was finally arranged, the MAE gave the Spanish police with the following:

> 'Upon embarking the group of Sephardim at the Port of Málaga, the police should inform them that further negotiations between the Spanish and German governments regarding the liberation of other groups of Sephardim interned in German concentration camps, as well as their repatriation to Spain, will be conditional on their conduct abroad. Any press declaration or statement made against the Spanish government will lead to the automatic halt of the negotiations with the German government. Following the order of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Málaga police should so inform these Sephardim, and make sure that they understand the extent of this warning. Ideally, this should be communicated to them by a person of their trust, in a correct and polite manner —so that they leave Spain with a good impression of our country'.[20]

Francoist authorities washed their hands of the issue of the fate of the Spanish Jewish colony abroad, and only agreed to the repatriation of a reduced number of persons after much pressure from the relief organisations. By 1940, there were about 2,500 Spanish Jews living in France. Of these, approximately 500 migrated to Spain prior to the German ultimatum by the own means. From the remaining 2,000, Spain repatriated 335 at most. In Salonika, there were, according to Nazi figures, 511 Jews of Spanish nationality. Their repatriation from Spain was delayed owing to Spanish reluctance. On 2 August 1943, the Germans deported 367 of them to Bergen-Belsen, the rest managed to hide or flee. After four months of internment in Bergen-Belsen, the group of 367

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[18] Baraibar to Blickenstaff (25 August 1943); USHMM, RG-68.066M, Reel 39, GII/327/5.

[19] Blickenstaff to Baraibar, MAE European Section (15 October 1943); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/1.

[20] Doussinague to DGS (10 December 1943); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/4. My translation. The text has been minimally simplified for the sake of intelligibility.

Sephardim from Greece were allowed to proceed to Spain in early 1944, and were promptly evacuated to Fedhala thanks to the combined efforts of UNRRA, RSARO, and JDC.[21]

At the same time the Franco government engaged in the 'repatriation' of its Jewish nationals from Nazi-occupied Europe, the persecution of Sephardim within Spain intensified. From the summer of 1943, Blickenstaff noticed an 'increasing tendency of the Spaniards to throw out of the country refugees who have been living here for as long as 10 or 15 years, and expulsion orders are being served against such people'.[22] These persons, in their majority Sephardic Jews who migrated to Spain in the interwar years, were not refugees from Nazism but Spanish citizens who had married and had sons serving in the Spanish army.

> 'It appears that the work permits of these people are now being withdrawn by the Spanish authorities, and that they are being told that they must leave Spain. This in effect means that their situation becomes similar to that of the refugees and that the refugee problem is thus constantly being increased'.[23]

By August 1943, at least 30 of them had been interned in the disciplinary camp in Nanclares de la Oca (Álava).[24] Unlike Miranda de Ebro, the Nanclares concentration camp was conceived for persons sentenced for criminal activities: thieves, robbers, black marketeers (*estraperlistas*), and homosexuals. It was by far the worst of all Franco prisons. In words of the camp's commandant, forced labour practices at Nanclares had been refined 'to work the people until they could not stand any longer'.[25] Francoist authorities claimed that these Jews were there because they had disobeyed expulsion orders. But most of the

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[21] See Rother, *Franco y el Holocausto*, 287-91; and Bernd Rother, 'Spain and the German Repatriation Ultimatum, 1943/44', in Corry Guttstadt, et al., *Bystanders, Rescuers or Perpetrators?*, 101-112.

[22] Yencken to FO (1 September 1943) TNA, FO/371/36642/W12674. See also Blickenstaff, RSARO, to Germán Baraibar, MAE, European section (20 August 1943); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/3.

[23] Blickenstaff to Baraibar (20 August 1943); AGA, AMAE, R-1716/3.

[24] Jacobo Benefrain, Max Gutschein, Gustave Haas Haenleiner, August Hirschler, Jaime Kleinmann, Georges Ornstein, Nicolás Strauss, José Roffe. Katzki, JDC Lisbon to JDC New York (19 November 1943); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 916.

[25] Blickenstaff, 'Confidential Report' (30 Sept 1943); JDC, Reel 69, Folder 916.

refugees said not to have been officially notified of their expulsion, neither the reasons for it. They were not judged or found guilty of any crime, and yet were forced to work breaking rocks and building roads. After a visit to Nanclares, Blickenstaff wrote: 'The treatment of prisoners is extremely bad. Food is not adequate either in quantity or in quality, housing conditions are terrible, and beatings of the prisoners occur frequently.' In fact, during his visit he learnt that two Spaniards had just died owing to the beatings. Blickenstaff also recalls that a German boy refugee at Nanclares, who had been arrested for seeking the assistance of the US Embassy in Madrid, 'received blows very frequently' allegedly to satisfy the Germans.[26] Despite RSARO's relatively good rapport with Spanish authorities, Blickenstaff was not able to obtain the separation of Sephardic Jews from the rest of criminals at Nanclares. The camp commandant's response to this request is quite illustrative of the treatment that these innocent persons received at Nanclares:

> 'Driven by an excessive sentiment of humanity I have … I was guided by the idea that all these foreigners would stay only a short while and would take efficient steps to leave Spain. But things have not developed like that and it seems as if these foreigners, being assured of a real comfort which is becoming almost familiar, they are asleep in their situation without doing anything efficient towards the fulfilment of their expulsion order. Therefore and in order not to prolongate their internment by my conduct, I wish to inform you that I feel obliged to suspend from now on my intervention of any kind between you and them'.[27]

These Jews were not victims of Nazi racial policy. In fact, they were not within Nazi jurisdiction. These were Spanish nationals whom the Franco regime persecuted and deported out of its own initiative. These are but a few of these cases. José Palomo Sagués, for example, was born to a Spanish-speaking Sephardic family in Bursa (Turkey) and moved to Barcelona in the early 1920s.

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[26] RSARO Madrid, 'Trip to North of Spain taken by Janine Blickenstaff, David Blickenstaff, and Lawrence L. Parrish, 18-23 August 1944'; USC, bMS-16007/2(3).

[27] DGS, Commander at Campo de Concentración de Detenidos de Nanclares de la Oca, Álava, to Blickenstaff (3 November 1943); AFSC, Box 10, Folder 'Spain: Letters from Madrid'.

At first he earned his living as a street vendor, then he opened a tie business. He married and had a son. On 20 December 1940, he received a visit from the Spanish police, and was arrested on the ground that he was a 'dangerous person'. Palomo was interned in Miranda de Ebro until RSARO arranged his liberation in early 1943. But in June 1943, José was arrested again and sent to Nanclares de la Oca until his emigration could be arranged.[28] Alberto Adjiman Galimany, a trader of Turkish-Sephardic origin, was arrested for no specific reason on 3 May 1943 and sent to prison in Barcelona and later sent to Nanclares.[29] Jacques Haim Soriano's penitentiary file states that despite not having committed any crime, he was imprisonned 'pre-emptively' in Oviedo on 11 June 1942. On 9 July 1943, Soriano was also sent to Nanclares de la Oca.[30] The Sephardic Jew, Abraham Pérez Lívico, resident of Tangier, was sent to prison in Madrid (Prisión de Santa Engracia) on 21 August 1941. Jaime Zacuto was a Salonika-born Jew of Spanish nationality, who was imprisoned in Jaén (Prisión del Partido) on 10 June 1943. Both Pérez Lívico and Zacuto were deported from Spain aboard the SS *Gouverneur-Général Lépine* on 21 June 1944, bound for Fedhala.[31] At least six of these denationalised Spanish Jews migrate to Palestine aboard the SS *Nyassa* on 23 January 1944.[32] The fact that most of these Spanish Jews were arrested in the summer of 1943 suggests that Francoist authorities used the context of the 'repatriation' and later deportation from Spain of Spanish Jews from Nazi-occupied Europe, as a cover to get rid of its own Jewish population in a way that nobody, except the victims themselves and a few relief workers, would notice.

[28] Calvet, *Huyendo del Holocausto*, 47.
[29] AGA, TP-8-7-276-R, Alberto Adjiman Galimany.
[30] AGA, TP-8-12-923-R, Jacques Haim Soriano.
[31] AGA, TP-8-17-249-R, Abraham Pérez Lívico, and TP-8-20-1571-R, Jaime Zacuto.
[32] See ship manifestos at AGA, AMAE, R-2179-43-348 (available in USHMM RG-36.001M, Reel 3).

The Jewish Resistance and the Rescue of Children

Prior to the summer of 1942, children had been spared from mass arrests by the French police. But this situation came to an end during the *rafles* of the *Vélodrome d'Hiver* of 16 and 17 July 1942. Over 4,100 Jewish children were arrested in the occupied zone and, over the following weeks, deported to their deaths. In unoccupied France, the arrest of Jewish children only began in late August, even though French authorities began taking steps several weeks before that. On 3 August, the Vichy government suspended all liberations from the camps in unoccupied France, which now became real death traps. By the end of the month, 4,000 persons were deported to their deaths.[33]

In Vichy France, the arrest of Jewish children began during the so-called '*Nuit de Vénissieux*' of 26 August 1942. That evening, a number of OSE social workers were called to the internment camp at Vénissieux, in the Lyon suburbs, to screen some 1,500 foreign Jews who were to be transferred to Drancy for deportation. Realising the extreme urgency of this situation, the OSE's directive committee took the difficult decision of attempting to convince Jewish parents to hand over their children to the OSE to spare them from deportation. To achieve this, OSE volunteers often lied to parents, promising that their children would be returned to them in a matter of days.[34] Elisabeth Hirsch, a social worker from the EIF, had terrible memories from that night:

> 'We knew that there were at least one hundred children to rescue —their parents would be deported the next day. We had to utilise all our forces to convince them to entrust their children to us. It was a horrific night. Many parents would not want to let go their children, and some kids refused to abandon their families. Mothers screamed, kids wept, and the air was charged with cries that continued to resonate in my ears for many months to come'.[35]

After tremendous effort, the OSE managed to rescue 108 children. But the

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[33] Anne Grynberg, 'Les Camps du Sud de la France: de l'Internement a la Déportation', *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 3 (May-June 1993), 557-66.
[34] CDJC, DLXI-62/63, Testimony of Jeannine (née Kahn) Lifschitz, 2.
[35] CDJC, DLXI-40, Testimony of Elisabeth Hirsch, 1-2. My translation.

next question was what to do with them. Dr Joseph Weill and his colleagues at the OSE agreed that sending these children to the OSE centres was no longer a safe way to protect them from imminent police raids. In this sense, the *maisons* of the OSE and the EIF had become mortal traps for Jewish children, and it became necessary to disperse them before new roundups took place.[36]

Hence, in the aftermath of the Vénissieux incident, the relief workers of the OSE and the EIF broke with their previous lawful practices and resorted to clandestine methods to guarantee the safety of these children. But first it was necessary to dismantle their children's centres. Thus, when the French police broke into the agricultural centres of the EIF in Moissac and Beaulieu with arrest orders, they were furious not to find a single child.[37] The next step was to provide these children with non-Jewish identities. Next, the OSE and the EIF employed three different methods to spare these endangered children from deportation. There were three options available: to hide them in cooperation with a network of religious institutions and French Christian families known as the '*Réseau Garel*', to smuggle them into Switzerland, and to send them to Palestine via Spain. In total, around one hundred people worked towards these rescue operations, most of whom were young women working under OSE leader Andrée Salomon.[38]

The *Réseau Garel* was named after OSE volunteer Georges Garel (born Grigori Garfinkel), a Jew from Vilnius who worked as an engineer in Lyon. Following the Vénnisieux roundups in late August 1942, Dr Weill entrusted Garel with organising and supervising a clandestine network to hide Jewish children at the OSE's and EIF's centres in the French meridional. The choice of the young Lyonais over more senior relief workers is explained by the fact that he had never been associated to any Jewish relief agency and thus his name was not known to government officials. Rather than establishing a new organisation, the Archbishop of Toulouse Jean-Gérard Saliège, who had

[36] One of the best documented tragedies is that of the Maison d'Izieu, near Lyon. On 6 April 1944, the 44 Jewish children at Izieu were arrested, deported, and murdered following orders from the head of the local Gestapo, Klaus Barbie, also known as the 'Butcher of Lyon'. Serge Klarsfeld, *The Children of Izieu: a Human Tragedy* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1984).
[37] CDJC, DLXI-58/59, Testimony of Denise Lévy, 1-2.
[38] CDJC, DLXI-104, Testimony of Dr Joseph Weill.

vigorously opposed the arrests of Jews, convinced Garel to cooperate with Catholic welfare infrastructures already in place. Together with his aids, Garel toured all potential places of hiding in the unoccupied zone: Christian homes, boarding schools, orphanages, hospitals, and youth hostels.[39] One of Garel's most notable partners was Abbé Alexandre Glasberg's *Amitié Chrétienne*, a Christian Jewish-aid organisation that had been active since mid-1941 and had a crucial role finding places of hiding where Jewish children could live safely as 'Christian children' under their care. In Nice, Bishop Paul Rémond offered his own quarters to hide 527 Jewish children from the so-called *Réseau Marcel*, organised from Moussa Abadi and Odette Rosenstock.[40] In Marseille, the Capuchin friar Père Marie-Benoît negotiated, in November 1942, the transfer of 30,000 Jews to the Italian occupation zone, and facilitated the escape of 4,000 more Jews to Switzerland. The protestant group CIMADE also provided refuge and shelter to Jewish refugees in multiple locations. In Chambon-sur-Lignon (Haute-Loire), for instance, a Protestant community of 3,000 villagers hid around 5,000 Jews.[41] This was not always an easy task since the majority of these children did not speak French.[42] By the end of the war, Garel's clandestine network still maintained 1,500 children in hiding.[43]

Given the success of the *Réseau Garel*, the smuggling of children into Switzerland was seen as a secondary, most dangerous, and sometimes unnecessary option given the various ways to hide them in France. According to Garel, children chosen for migration to Switzerland usually fell under three categories: those with typically Jewish physical traits who could not pass as 'Aryans', those most attached to their religious practices, and those who were particularly 'talkative' and were not able to play their role as gentiles in a non-

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[39] CDJC, DLXI-29/30, Testimony of Marcel Gershon, 2-4; and CDJC, DLXI-47, Testimony of René Klein (née Nicole Bloch), 2.

[40] Andrée Poch-Karsenti, *Les 527 Enfants d'Odette et Moussa: Histoire du Réseau Marcel* (Paris: Publieur, 2006).

[41] Cohen, *Persécutions et Sauvetages*, 428-70.

[42] CDJC, DLXI-58/59, Testimony of Denise Lévy, 3-4.

[43] Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews*, 130-1, 213-5; Hazan, *Rire le Jour, Pleurer la Nuit*, 63-71. For Christian attitudes towards the rescue of Jews, see Limore Yagil, *Chrétiens et Juifs sous Vichy, 1940-1944: Sauvetage et Désobéissance Civile* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2005), 91-106.

Jewish environment.[44] Given that these children were not only more difficult to hide, but also could endanger their peers in hiding, their carers at OSE and EIF concluded that sending them to Switzerland was a safer option. This operation was relatively uncomplicated, especially because most children spoke Alsatian, Yiddish, or German, and could thus easily pass as Swiss. Since older children were usually inspected more closely by Swiss authorities, children often dressed in the 'boy scout' uniforms of the EIF to reinforce their child's appearance. Sometimes, soccer games were organised near the border, in cooperation with the AFSC, to allow them to slip into Switzerland after dawn.[45]

The majority of children convoys to Switzerland crossed the frontier near Geneva, either through Annemasse or Thonon-les-Bains, in the department of Haute-Savoie.[46] Clandestine passages to Switzerland continued without major trouble during the period of Italian occupation, and in spite of strong frontier surveillance. Depending on the exact location and time, the Swiss frontier could be patrolled by the French, Italian, or German police on one side, and by Swiss police on the other side.[47] Following the German take over of the previously Italian occupation zone in South-East France towards the end of 1943, these practices became significantly more dangerous. In a short span of time, three children convoys were intercepted by Germans patrols at the Swiss frontier, leading to the discontinuation of these clandestine passages. Aware that the Jewish resistance in Southern France was organising clandestine rescue networks, the members of the OSE and the EIF turned to these underground rescue networks to send Jewish children to Palestine via Spain.

La Main Forte, the embryo of the Jewish resistance movement, began to develop in Toulouse during the French *débâcle* of the summer of 1940. This group was a conglomerate of several Jewish-conscious groups of various political affiliations, including the religious Zionists of *Ha-Mizrachi*, the socialists of *Hashomer Hatzair* ('The Young Guard'), and the Marxists of *Poale Zion* ('Workers of Zion'). There were also a number of Jewish intellectuals, such

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[44] OHD-(1)64, Testimony of Georges Garel, 23.
[45] Curtis, *Verdict on Vichy*, 204-5.
[46] Hazan, *Rire le Jour, Pleurer la Nuit*, 70-1.
[47] Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews*, 247-255.

as the director of the *Nouvelle Revue Française* Benjamin Crémieux, the Zionist journalist Arnold Mandel, and the Zionist poet and future leader of the Jewish resistance David Knout. Despite the fact that most French Jews were highly assimilated, gathering around other Jews from all over Europe favoured a new sense of 'Jewishness' and common awareness of the fate of the Jewish people. The Alsatian Jewish poet Claude Vigée noted that even the most secular Jews began to attend the circle of Jewish studies led by Rabbi Paul Roitman in the old synagogue of Rue Palaprat, 'because one would be among one's kind'. As many others, Vigée found in this religious congregation a way of living that 'that was not completely degrading, which was not pure flight'.[48] Naturally, some factions of *La Main Forte* were more partisan than others, but all of them shared a basis for common action that looked beyond the challenges of survival, into the creation of Jewish nationhood. Towards the end of 1941, Toulouse's Jewish resistance movement adopted the name of *Armée Juive* (AJ).

Under the leadership of Abraham Polonski, Aron 'Lucien' Lublin, and David Knout, the *Armée Juive* began to recruit members from other Zionist organisations such as the *Mouvement de la Jeunesse Sioniste* (MJS) and the EIF on the basis of 'a friend brings a friend'. To become part of the AJ, new recruits had to undergo a solemn initiation ritual to prove their commitment to the Zionist cause. Facing a flag with a blue star of David on a white field, they had to swear an oath on a Hebrew Bible by which they pledged allegiance to the future Jewish state in Palestine.[49] In 1944, the EIF (which had been banned in 1943), the MJS, and the AJ united their forces under the *Organisation Juive de Combat* (OJC), a Jewish fighting group that was formally recognised by the *Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur* (FFI). At least 400 partisans are estimated to have fought for the OJC, most notably in the aftermath of the Allied landings in Normandy in June 1944, and during the liberation of Paris, Lyon, Grenoble, Nice, and Toulouse.[50] In addition to fighting the German occupiers, the *Armée*

[48] During his period in clandestinity, Claude Strauss adopted the name of Claude Vigée —a phonetic variation of *Vie j'ai* ('I'm alive'). Vigée maintained this name in his career as an author; OHD-(1)49, Interview with Claude Vigée.
[49] Poznanski, *Jews in France during World War II*, 157-8.
[50] Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews*, 257.

Juive played a crucial role in the rescue of Jewish children from unoccupied France in the last months of the war.

OSE leader André Salomon first considered partnering with *Armée Juive* to organise clandestine children convoys to Spain during a meeting with the head of JA in Lyon, Ernest Lambert, towards the end of 1943. After receiving the approval of the OSE's directive committee, Salomon travelled to Toulouse to meet AJ leaders Jules Jefroykin and Abraham Polonski, with whom she discussed the possibilities for cooperation. Salomon explained that these children were in real peril, who would not be safe in France. The leaders of the AJ agreed to take them to Spain provided that they were physically capable of enduring the trip through the Pyrenees.[51] Up to that moment, the AJ's only role in the children passages to Switzerland had been to support the already existing networks of the OSE, the MJS, and *La Sixième*. By contrast, the AJ was the main organisation in charge of the clandestine crossing of adults into Spain. Since children were too vulnerable to join adult expeditions organised by the Jewish resistance, and needed greater care once in Spain, the AJ created a special service to meet their needs.

The resulting organisation, named *Service d'Évacuation et de Regroupement des Enfants* (SERE), started operations in the early spring of 1944.[52] Andrée Salomon herself was responsible for selecting the children for migration and bringing them to Toulouse. The children chosen for '*Aliyah*' through Spain were either those who had relatives in Palestine, or, most commonly, those whose parents had been deported and had no relatives who could take care of them in Europe. While awaiting their departure, they were usually sheltered in Abraham Polonski's own apartment in Toulouse. Upon Andrée Salomon's recommendation, Polonski appointed Gisèle Roman as head of SERE, a position which she held until the liberation of the French south in August 1944, when the last convoy departed to Spain, and SERE was dissolved.[53] Between

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[51] CDJC, DLXI-94, Testimony of Andrée Salomon, 18-21.

[52] This organisation should not be mistaken for the *Servicio de Evacuación de Refugiados Españoles* (SERE), which assisted Spanish refugees from Franco's Spain.

[53] Lucien Lublin emphasises the role played by the Bourguet family, from Alet-les-Bains, in facilitating this rescue operation. CDJC, DLXI-67, Testimony of Lucien Lublin, 17.

the departure from Toulouse of SERE's first convoy on 6 April 1944, and the last convoy in August, at least 88 children were rescued —excluding the teenagers— thanks to the joint efforts of SERE, OSE, and JDC.[54]

At the time of her appointment, Gisèle Roman, a Jewish refugee of Russian origin, was working at the OSE children's centre in Megève (Haute-Savoie), and thus was experienced in the organisation of children convoys to Switzerland. Her first task upon arrival to Toulouse was to find the safest and easiest route possible across the Pyrenees. Roman identified a route through Andorra that involved a train ride, a night stop-over at a hotel, an additional coach or taxi ride, as well as climbing across the Pyrenees. The convoys used to leave from Toulouse in the night train —usually at 3 or 4 am— and arrived at Perpignan in the early morning. From Perpignan, they used to hire several taxis to Rouze (Ariège), a French village close to the border with Andorra that served as meeting point with the *passeur* (French for 'smuggler'). In other occasions, the convoys got off the train at Carcassone, from whence they met the *passeur* and initiated the journey into the mountains. At that point, adult escorts returned to Toulouse. The *passeur*'s mission was to lead the children convoy through Andorra and across the Pyrenees, to the Spanish province of Lérida, in the Spanish North-East. Once they arrived at Lérida's coach station, the children convoy was taken over by a liaison of the SERE, usually Gisèle's own husband. While in Spain, children rescued by SERE were looked after by the JDC in Barcelona, until their migration to Palestine could be arranged.[55]

The train ride between Toulouse and Perpignan was arguably the most dangerous part of the trip. For security reasons, the convoy was usually split into two smaller groups. Gisèle Roman escorted children aged up to twelve years old, whereas Régine, her assistant, took care of the teenagers. Additionally, the group was also dispersed amongst various train

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[54] Lucien Lazare, *La Résistance Juive en France* (Paris: Stock, 1987), 311.

[55] Monsieur Roman's full name does not appear anywhere in the documentation. He had himself entered Spain clandestinely towards the end of April 1944 in one of the convoys of the SER, and gave his passeur a letter addressed to her wife Gisèle in which he told how to avoid the misfortunes of his own convoy. Amongst other advices, he emphasised the need for more highly caloric food supplies (e.g. chocolate) to better endure the trip. See CDJC, DLXI-91 Testimony of M. Roman. My translation.

compartments, usually in a way in which the oldest amongst them would look after the youngest. Roman carried herself the children's few personal belongings in her backpack, as well as another suitcase with two automatic weapons that she handed over to the *passeur* upon arrival to the meeting point. The fact that some children were also armed with a grenade belt gives a good sense of how risky these rescue operations were. Back in Toulouse, Gisèle and other AJ members had taught them how to use the grenades through various games. It is not clear, however, whether the grenades were actually at any point. The youngsters had also been instructed on how to behave during the journey, which was heavily controlled by agents of the Gestapo. Upon arrival to the destination, they had been trained to disperse themselves throughout the station platforms in small groups, while keeping eye contact with Gisèle Roman. When she considered that there was no danger in sight she whistled a song, and the children followed her out of the station. Following Polonski's orders, there was also a young man who accompanied every group up to the Spanish side of the mountains. His responsibility was to personally report to Polonski on the conduct of the *passeur*, and to report on incidents occurred during the journey. He was also in charge of returning back to Toulouse the suitcase with the weapons the convoy no longer needed.[56]

All SERE children convoys except one managed to safely reach Spain, which can be seen a success considering the strong police surveillance and the many hazards of the journey across the Pyrenees. In that tragic occasion, Gisèle had taken a group of thirteen children to Rouze, left them with the *passeur*, and returned to Perpignan to organise the next convoy. The *passeur*, however, was impatient to get rid of the first group children as soon as possible, and took them to Andorra without waiting for Gisèle Roman and the second group. In their way, they met a German patrol and, since the *passeur* did not have the 'special mission' documents Gisèle used to carry with her, the whole group was arrested and presumably deported. Decades after, Gisèle still had haunting memories of this tragic event: 'it has been more than twenty years since this happened, and, believe me, it has been more than twenty years that I cannot sleep, and when I

[56] CDJC, DLXI-90, Testimony of Gisèle Roman.

do, I have nightmares: I see the Germans snatching the children away from me'.[57] Despite this was the only real tragedy, there were many other instances in which the whole group was very close to disaster. In one occasion, Gisèle was sitting with a group of 28 of 'her' children at the canteen in Carcassone's railway station, when a German border patrol assembled around the table right next to theirs. Gisèle quickly realised that the German officers started to regard the whole group with suspicion. One of the officers 'turned pale' as he recognised her. He happened to be a Czech who had known Gisèle before the war, and was aware that she was both Jewish as well as an active Zionist. He persuaded the other officers that there was nothing suspicious about them, saving the entire convoy from an almost certain death.

To the youngest children, Gisèle presented this journey as an adventure, although the older ones were fully conscious of the tragedy that they were going through. In one instance, as their train approached the camp of Rivesaltes on their way to Perpignan, some of the kids told their guide: 'you see, Gisèle, this is where our parents are'.[58] Gisèle Roman continued to take children convoys into Spain until the liberation of the French South in August 1944. When she took the last convoy of thirteen children to Perpignan in mid-August 1944, there was such chaos that she could not find a single taxi to continue their way. Finally, she decided to go by foot to Rouze. In their way to the mountains they encountered several maquis as well as German frontier police. To the maquisards, who were suspicious of the Nazis and French collaborators — who, ironically, were also fleeing to Spain— she presented documents from the French resistance. To the Germans, she showed forged documents that claimed she was leading that group of children to Spain as part of a 'German secret mission'. The last convoy managed to arrive safely to Lérida, and Gisèle returned to Toulouse where she continued her work retrieving children who had been hidden in French households, religious institutions, as well as with the FRC. In an already liberated Toulouse, Gisèle and the other relief workers hosted all these children in the *château* that had previously been used as Gestapo

[57] CDJC, DLXI-90, Testimony of Gisèle Roman, 5. My translation.
[58] CDJC, DLXI-90, Gisèle Roman, 2. My translation.

headquarters during the war.[59]

The last of the SERE's children convoys to Spain was escorted by Elisabeth Hirsch ('Henriette Ducom'), of Hungarian origin. Hirsch was a professional social worker who had previously volunteered at Gurs in 1940, and was later recruited by Andrée Salomon to work at the OSE children's centre in Lyon. During the Vénissieux raids in August 1942, she was instrumental in saving children from deportation. Following the OSE's complete transition into clandestinity, Hirsch also helped leading children convoys to Switzerland.[60] Hirsch's mid-August 1944 convoy to Spain was accompanied by three *passeurs*, and comprised a group of 12 children aged eight and above, who travelled alongside 23 adults in a thirty-five-strong group. Besides escorting the convoy to Spain, Elisabeth Hirsch had also been assigned a special mission. Unlike the previous convoy escorts, who returned to Toulouse after handing over to the *passeur*, Hirsch had been given instructions to accompany the group to Barcelona. Once in the Catalan capital, her task was to gather all the children who had previously been sent to Spain, and escort them until the moment they embarked for Palestine.[61] After a three-day journey, the expedition reached La Seu d'Urgell (Lérida, Spain). For the sixteen-year-old Max Zelman, this moment had a meaningful connotation: 'At last, drained but content, we catch sight of the first Spanish village further down, and through it the sight of Liberty'.[62] Upon arrival, the Spanish *Guardia*

[59] CDJC, DLXI-90, Testimony of Gisèle Roman, 5.
[60] CDJC, DLXI-40, Testimony of Elisabeth Hirsch ('Böszi').
[61] The work of Gisèle Roman at the head of SERE has not been sufficiently acknowledged by the literature. For example, the SERE is only briefly mentioned in Tsilla Hersco and Jacques Lazarus (eds.), *Organisation Juive de Combat. Résistance/Sauvetage. France 1940-1945* (Paris, 2002), 40. Josep Calvet, on the other hand, mistakes SERE for SER —the AJ's rescue service for adults— and does not mention the important work of Gisèle Roman. See Calvet, *Huyendo del Holocausto*, 165. The underrepresentation of Gisèle Roman's achievements at the head of the SERE, despite the fact that she managed to rescue at least 87 children excluding teenagers (CDJC, DLXI-90 Testimony of Gisèle Roman, 5), contrasts with the greater visibility of Elisabeth Hirsch's role in leading children across the Pyrenees. A possible explanation is that, while Roman remained in France upon liberation, Elisabeth Hirsch had a more visible role organising the departure of the children to Palestine, and escorted the whole group to Cádiz in the fall of 1944.
[62] I have assumed that the letter was written by the sixteen-year-old Max Zelman (1928, Frankfurt), since the other Max in the group, Max Skoronski (Paris, 1934), was hardly a decade old at the time. See letter from Max [Zelman] to Andrée Salomon (15 October 1944); reproduced in CDJC, DLXI-94, Testimony of Andrée Salomon, 19-20. My translation.

Civil interrogated all of the expedition members, including the children, who were asked about the name of the *passeur*, the route followed, and each of their identities. The children, who were already used to 'playing their roles' from their time in hiding, made up all sorts of lies. Hirsch was surprised to find out that none of them had mentioned the fact that they had been intercepted by the maquis. After two weeks of forced residence in Lérida, they were welcomed in Barcelona by Samuel Sequerra, of the JDC. As usual, the adults were dispersed in pensions, whereas the children were hosted in Barcelona at a children's reception centre that another member of their team had prepared in advanced.[63]

Shortly after the departure of the first children convoy in the spring, Sequerra appointed the Constantinople-born Laura Margolis, an US citizen, as head of a children's home in Barcelona that was to serve as a reception centre for the youngsters sent by the Jewish resistance. As soon as she arrived in Barcelona, she rented a large property, furnished it, and hired the needed personnel. Margolis also went to Lérida on several occasions to pick up group arrivals. The first group of transit children to arrive to Margolis' home, however, were not sent by the SERE, but by the Dutch HeHalutz. These were politically-conscious Jewish pioneers in their late teens, who were also waiting to go to Palestine. Due to their Zionist upbringing and older age, they looked after the younger children convoys that were to come. The first convoy arrived at the home in June 1944, and they first sailings for Palestine took place on 7 and 21 August 1944, with eight and twelve children respectively.[64] Their emigration was organised by the JDC office in Lisbon, which notified Margolis of the date the children had to be ready to depart. Margolis left the Barcelona home in August 1944, once the home was already fully operative and her services could be of more use elsewhere.

Margolis remembers how shocked she was when she saw the first children refugees from Nazi-occupied Europe arrive in Barcelona. She recalls that the

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[63] CDJC, DLXI-40, Testimony of Elisabeth Hirsch.

[64] At a young age, Laura Margolis migrated to the US. After graduating in social work, Margolis assisted Jewish refugees in Cuba and Shanghai during the first years of the war. In view of the plight of the refugees in Europe, she requested to be transferred there. She arrived at the JDC's offices in Lisbon in March 1944. See USHMM, RG-50.030.0149, Interview with Laura Margolis.

children arrived in a pitiful state, not just owing to the arduous journey across the Pyrenees, but also owing to everything they had gone through before —in the camps, and while in hiding. All of them had false names and were rather introspective. Slowly, thanks to the warm environment at the Barcelona home, the kids would 'open like flowers', regain confidence in the people around them, and shared their real family names —which they had not revealed for a long time. There were also very dramatic moments, when the older kids, conscious of the inexplicable tragedy of the Holocaust, shared their experiences. In this sense, Margolis emphasises how her task was not only to accommodate and nourish these children, but also to comfort them and help them regain a 'normal' life. In parallel to these psychological aspects, they also learnt Hebrew and about life in Palestine in preparation for their *Aliyah*.[65] At the home in Barcelona, they waited for several months until the ship for Palestine could be arranged. On 18 September, they 'discreetly' celebrated *Rosh Hashanah*, challenging the anti-Jewish rules of Franco's Spain: 'We felt like *marranos* in the times of the Spanish Inquisition'.[66] Eventually, all of them moved to Cádiz, where the SS *Guinée* would call on its way to Palestine. While in Cádiz, they were accommodated at the Hotel Playa Victoria, on the seaside. On 26 October 1944, at 4 am, Dr Sequerra and Elisabeth Hirsch saw the *Guinée* depart to Palestine with a total of 79 Jewish children and 200 adults.[67] Meanwhile, Hirsch sent a dossier to Henrietta Szold, founder of the Hadassah movement, to announce the arrival of these young settlers to Palestine. By the time she had accomplished her mission with the SERE, Elisabeth Hirsch found herself stranded in Spain without documents that proved her real identity. In order not to be mistaken for a Nazi collaborator upon returning to France — many of whom also sought shelter in Franco's Spain— she had to wait until April 1945, when her situation could be normalised.

[65] CDJC, DLXI-41, Testimony of Laura Jarblum (née Margolis), 2-3. My translation.
[66] CDJC, DLXI-40, Testimony of Elisabeth Hirsch, 8. My translation.
[67] 'Deuxième Periode (Août 42-Février 44)'; CDJC, MDXCIII, OSE(I)-4, 14.

The Jewish Resistance and the Rescue of Adults

Before Jewish resistance groups began to send adult convoys across the Pyrenees in an organised manner, there were many others who attempted the clandestine rescue of Jewish persons from unoccupied France in more rudimentary ways. In late 1940, for instance, the eighteen-year-old Robert Veil created his own resistance group in his hometown of Castres (Tarn). Although humble in means, Veil and his companions managed to conceal Jewish refugees in their cattle carriages and get them through Spanish customs with success.[68] Like Veil's, there were many other small-scale individual enterprises to bring both Jews and non-Jews into Spain, most of which have not been documented. Towards the summer of 1942, the friar Père-Marie Benoît directed small groups of Jews towards Spain, from his Capuchin monastery in Marseille.[69] Prior to the German occupation of Vichy France in November 1942, refugees were able to cross into Spain clandestinely following easier footpaths along the Mediterranean coast. After the Franco-Spanish frontier was reinforced by the Germans in late 1942, however, refugees were forced to take more difficult paths inland, often involving Mountain passes above 1,600 meters.[70] The first Jewish resistance group to organise such crossings on a large scale were the members of *La Sixième,* the underground wing of the EIF movement —whom the 'cattle-carriage rescuer' Robert Veil also joined. *La Sixième*, which was led by EIF leaders Robert Gamzon and Marc Haguenau, was created following the mass arrest and deportation from France during the summer of 1942. Following the '*Nuit de Vénissieux*' of 26 to 27 August 1942 in the unoccupied zone, Michel Elias ('Cabri') was sent to Perpignan to explore potential routes across the Pyrenees, before himself joined one of the convoys and reached the Allied forces in North Africa.[71]

[68] Hersco and Lazarus (eds.), *Organisation Juive de Combat*, 361.
[69] See Avni, *Spain, the Jews, and Franco*, 97-8; Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust*, 254-259; and Susan Zuccotti, *Père Marie-Benoît and Jewish Rescue: How a French Priest together with Jewish Friends saved Thousands during the Holocaust* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), 69-88.
[70] Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews*, 255-9.
[71] CDJC, CMXX-33, Testimony of Roger Fichtenberg, 1-3.

In November 1942, EIF leaders Henri Wahl and Ninon Haït entrusted the Alsatian Denise Lévy ('Belette') with organising *La Sixième*'s convoys to Spain. Lévy had previously been *commissaire* of one of EIF's agricultural camps, and managed to save many teenagers from deportation during the *rafles* of August 1942. Those chosen for the first crossings were late teenagers and young adults who were too old to be hidden in religious institutions or transferred to Switzerland. Lucienne Samuel was appointed to lead the first convoy to Spain. To that end, she borrowed the identity of Jeanne Barnier, secretary of the city council of Dieulefit (Drôme). Thanks to her new identity and 'special mission' credentials, Lucienne Samuel was able to save a group of fifteen young men and women who did not speak French and hence were more vulnerable to deportation.[72] The group departed from Oloron-Sainte-Marie (Basses-Pyrénées) on 17 December 1942, towards the Spanish border control at the Canfranc International railway station. Unfortunately, it did not go as planned. At Bedous, two members of the convoy —Roger Picard and Samy Stourdzé— were arrested and deported. The remaining 13 youths in this convoy managed to reach Pamplona (Navarra).[73] Upon arrival to Spain, the group was sent to prison and later transferred to forced residence in various villages in the region. Some of them reached Casablanca in November 1943, joined the Allied armies, and took part in the Normandy landings.[74] After the relative success of the first group, Denise Lévy organised two more convoys. The second convoy, which left on 1 January 1943, reached Spain safely under Roger Fichtenberg's leadership.[75] Unfortunately, the entire third convoy was captured by the German frontier police. In view of the increased frontier surveillance, *La Sixième* immediately discontinued these crossings.[76] In January 1943, EIF united efforts with the Zionist youth group MJS, with links to the communist *Main d'Œuvre Immigré* (MOI), and *Fédération des Sociétés Juives* (FSJ). *La Sixième*

[72] See CDJC, DCCCLXI-77, Testimony of Denise Lévy; and Hersco and Lazarus (eds.), *Organisation Juive de Combat*, 351-352.

[73] CDJC, DLXI-58/59, Testimony of Denise Lévy, 2. See also the testimony of Georges Weill, cited in Hammel, *Souviens-Toi d'Amalek*, 205-6.

[74] See testimony of 'J.R.' in Anny Latour, *La Résistance Juive en France*, 159-160.

[75] CDJC, CMXX-33, Testimony of Roger Fichtenberg

[76] See CDJC, CMXX-37, Testimony of Denise Lévy; and CDJC, DLXI-58/59, Testimony of Denise Lévy.

thus increased its number from about 88 members, to several hundred.[77]

Despite the fact that the Pyrenees seemed unconquerable at the beginning of 1943, the *Armée Juive* sought to build on *La Sixième*'s pioneering attempts and send Jewish convoys across the Pyrenees on a larger scale. However, the AJ's adult convoys to Spain cannot be strictly defined as rescue operations, since there were various other safer ways to survive in France other than leaving for Spain, such as going into hiding.[78] As such, this 'rescue' initiative should be understood in the context of the Jewish armed resistance against Nazi Germany. As put by Henri Wahl: 'In Switzerland we smuggled mainly children and the elderly, it was a land of refuge; in Spain, on the contrary, we organised passages for young people able to bear arms'.[79] Exceptionally, however, some adult convoys did include elderly people and children, and even though they could at times compromise the rest of the group. Despite the French patriotic tone that these operations acquired after the war, the AJ's rescue networks to Spain had a very strong Zionist component that should not be neglected. In fact, the members of the Jewish resistance regarded the flight to Palestine as their personal *Aliyah*, and the crossing of the Pyrenees as their 'Jewish military service'.

The members of the Jewish resistance encouraged Jewish youths between 18 and 25 years of age to fight rather than to hide, and offered them several possibilities. One option was to fight the Nazis by joining the maquis in France, the other, to migrate to Palestine via Spain and join the British Army's Jewish Brigade. Obviously, most of them preferred the second option. In principle, they were also given the choice to join De Gaulle's *Forces Françaises Libres* in North Africa, or any other Allied army of their preference.[80] In practice, however, the AJ prioritised those wanting to join the Jewish Brigade in Palestine due to the complexity and many resources that went into organising

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[77] Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust*, 251.
[78] Haim Avni, 'The Zionist Underground in Holland and France and the Escape to Spain', in Israel Gutman, and Efraim Zuroff (eds.), *Rescue Attempts during the Holocaust: Proceedings of the Second Yad Vashem International Historical Conference, Jerusalem 8-11, 1974* (Jerusalem, 1977), 562.
[79] CDJC, DLXI-101/102, Testimony of Henri Wahl, 4.
[80] 'L'Armée Juive (A.J.). Objectifs, Finalité, Idéologie, par Lucien Lublin' (undated); CDJC, CMXX-42.

the Pyrenees crossings, and the fact that it was possible to join De Gaulle's underground resistance within France. Roughly, 85 per cent of the young adults who reached Spain thanks to the AJ's clandestine network reached Palestine.[81] Only a minority of them remained in Spain for a longer period. This was the case of Gisèle Roman's husband. Owing to his bad eyesight he was not able to join the army, and thus chose to act as liaison for the children's convoys that his wife organised from Toulouse as part of the SERE's rescue initiatives.[82]

In April 1943, the Romanian Joseph Kruh ('Croustillon'), who at that time was responsible for recruiting new members for the AJ, was called to Toulouse to organise the clandestine crossings into Spain. This mission involved finding a *passeur* they could trust, make it across the Pyrenees and, once in Spain, find partners to support these networks financially, receive the refugees, and organise their departure to Palestine. Shortly after, in May 1943, Croustillon and his associate Shlomo Steinhorn ('Pierre Lacaze') had found a *passeur* from Saint-Girons called Adrien, and initiated their way over the Pyrenees with other twenty refugees, most of whom were members of the Dutch Jewish resistance. Croustillon and Steinhorn paid nearly 30,000 francs per person to the *passeur*, who promised lowering this exorbitant amount to 5,000 once they started to send convoys more regularly. For reference, it should be noted that a worker's monthly wage was about 3,000 francs. Naturally, some 'professional' *passeur* were completely unscrupulous and, despite their high rates, would vaguely point travellers in one direction and then disappear. Without *passeur*, however, refugees were not able to follow shepherds' trails and were soon lost. Many froze and starved in the mountain awaiting a break in the weather. Others were injured and even died due to falls.[83]

Upon arrival to the Spanish side, Croustillon gave his French identity documents to his guide Adrien, and instructed him to return them to Toulouse at the end of the trip so that AJ had proof that he was a reliable *passeur* to guide

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[81] Figure based on Jules Jefroykin's convoy of late May 1944. See OHD-(1)61, Jules Jefroykin, 24-25.
[82] CDJC, DLXI-91, Testimony of M. Roman, 1.
[83] Émilienne Eychenne, *Montagnes de la Peur et de l'Espérance: Le Franchissement de la Frontière Espagnole pedant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale dans le Département des Hautes Pyrénées* (Toulouse: Privat, 1980), 49-52.

further convoys. Croustillon would not need his counterfeit French identity documents in Spain, where he declared himself a French-speaking 'Canadian'. After spending several weeks in prison and forced residence in Lérida, Croustillon and his companion Steinhorn managed to reach Barcelona, where he met with Dr Samuel Sequerra, of the JDC. Croustillon informed Sequerra of the AJ's initiative to send regular convoys, and requested the JDC's financial support and cooperation. Sequerra, however, was suspicious of Croustillon, as there were many other refugees who had previously made similarly fantastic claims to him. In the absence of any document attesting their identity or links to the Jewish resistance, Sequerra refused to cooperate with him.[84] The rest of Croustillon's negotiations with the representatives from the WJC and the AFSC were equally sterile and disappointing. Croustillon and Steinhorn remained in Barcelona, waiting for other convoys to arrive following the route they had inaugurated.[85]

In the late summer of 1943, the AJ appointed the young Belgian Arnold Einhorn —barely twenty years old— to inaugurate a second route through the Pyrenees. Despite his young age, Einhorn had been interned in Rivesaltes, and had worked for the MJS producing and distributing forged documents amongst the members of the Jewish resistance. In the summer of 1943, however, Einhorn was denounced to the Germans by an anonymous source, and it was no longer safe for him —or the MJS— to continue working in his previous underground activities. When looking for a different resistance activity, MJS leader Toto Giniewski proposed the AJ in Toulouse to use the young Einhorn as a 'guinea pig' to inaugurate a new route into Spain. When Einhorn heard of the news, he was shocked. He thought it was impossible to reach Spain after the Germans had dramatically increased the Pyrenees surveillance from late 1942. Giniewksi's answer speaks for itself: 'Exactly. That's why we want you to try it … Toulouse is looking for volunteers that are desperate'.[86]

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[84] Apparently, Jules Jefroykin had sent a letter to introduce Croustillon to the JDC in Spain, but this letter never arrived.
[85] See CDJC, DLXI-54, Testimony of Joseph Croustillon; and OHD-(1)65, Testimony of Joseph Croustillon.
[86] Toto Giniewski is cited in USHMM, RG-50.030.0306, Testimony of Arnold Einhorn, 24-25.

Upon arrival to Toulouse, Einhorn received physical training in order endure the demanding journey through the Pyrenees, found a new guide, and recruited six people to join his first convoy. The group departed in August 1943, guided by the French *passeur* Bertrand Bordé, whom the AJ was putting to the test. Einhorn had received instructions to report to Dr Sequerra, as well as to Croustillon and Steinhorn in Barcelona. Although his superiors had told him that the whole journey would take only about forty-eight hours, it took him much longer to reach Barcelona. In fact, he spent several weeks in the prison of Sort and the camp of Miranda de Ebro before he could reach the Catalan capital. Einhorn does not give details about what was discussed with these three men. It seems that Einhorn's main task was, as Giniewski had told him, to serve as the AJ's 'guinea pig' proving that this second route was possible. In fact, he met some Jewish refugees in Spain who were suspicious of him simply because they did not know anyone who managed to reach Spain since the beginning of 1943. After several weeks stranded in Spain, the JDC and the AFSC finally booked ship passages for Einhorn and the other Jewish refugees brought by AJ. On 25 January 1944, he departed from the port of Cádiz aboard the SS *Nyassa*. Upon arrival t0 Haifa through, he joined the British Army's Jewish Brigade.[87]

In October 1943, after Croustillon's and Einhorn's 'test' convoys, the AJ leadership appointed the Polish Jacques Roitman, aged 21, to establish an independent organisation to deal with the passages to Spain, and gave him *carte blanche* to constitute his team as he pleased. The resulting organisation, the *Service d'Évacuation et de Regroupement* (SER), marks the transition from improvised to organised evacuation. One of Roitman's first tasks was to establish an AJ maquis at Bic, near Alban (Tarn) to physically train the transients before departure. Despite his young age, Roitman had joined the Jewish resistance soon after the French armistice of June 1940. His first job was to spy the *Commissariat Général aux Questions Juives* (CGQJ) in Toulouse and Grenoble, where he also recruited young members for the MJS and the AJ. When Roitman established the SER, the passage to Spain was organised in a very 'confuse and anarchic way', and only managed to send a few convoys that

[87] USHMM, RG-50.030*0306, Oral testimony of Arnold Einhorn.

departed from time to time with no regular schedule. The instructions he received from the AJ leadership were clear: to allow as many young people as possible to reach Palestine and enrol the Jewish brigade via Spain.[88] Roitman visited Toulouse, Paris, Lyon, Limoges, and Nice, the main foci of Jewish resistance, seeking contacts for his new organisation. The SER needed persons to synchronise the arrival to Toulouse of the candidates for migration, to provide them with forged documents, and to arrange lodging, equipment, and nourishment for the trip. Roitman hired a new *passeur* from Oloron-Sainte-Marie, and explored various routes that would be used alternatively. To avoid suspicion from the Germans patrolling the area, the transportation of the convoy to the base of the Pyrenees had to be arranged in smaller groups over a period of two two three days. In addition, Roitman also appointed a '*chef de convoi*', who carried the money for the guides, and a girl, who carried a disassembled weapon in a bag for the *passeur* and reported on any issues upon returning to the AJ maquis. Once at the meeting point at the foot of the Pyrenees, the *passeur* took over the group and initiated the hike through the Pyrenees.[89]

The first SER convoy, of about 50 people, left for Spain in late 1943, but had to return due to heavy snow. In mid-January 1944, the same group made a new attempt, but this time the *passeur* had been identified by the Germans and shot *in situ*, leaving the convoy exposed at the meeting point. The first successful convoy of the SER left on 28 February 1944 with 30 men, and reached Spain on 5 March. Four more groups followed during March and April. After another *passeur* was arrested by the Germans in April, the Oloron-Sainte-Marie route was abandoned. During the rest of 1944, there were groups departing every month with 15 to 30 people on average, with the exception of the 62-strong convoy of May 1944.[90] The last SER convoy to cross the Franco-Spanish border left on 26 August 1944, shortly after the liberation of Paris.[91] Although the

[88] OHD-(1)34, Testimony of Jacques Roitman, 8.
[89] See CDJC, DLXI-88/89, Testimony of Jacques Roitman; and OHD-(1)34, Testimony of Jacques Roitman.
[90] For a detailed account of this crossing, see CDJC, CMLXVII(2)-18 Anonymous testimony.
[91] Avni, 'The Zionist Underground', 568-573.

SER's activities cannot be strictly classified as rescue, Roitman did exceptionally allow elderly people and children in his convoys, even though they sometimes compromised the rest of the group. On one occasion, Roitman had just arrived at the train station in Toulouse —which was 'filled' with Germans— when a twelve-year-old who formed part of the convoy started to yell 'I don't want to go to Israel! I don't want to go to Israel!' putting the rest of the group at risk.[92]

On 3 May 1944, a convoy of 66 persons —including 16 youngsters from the EIF, 8 Jews from the Dutch resistance, and more than a dozen persons of advance age— reached Spain following a new route through Andorra. This group experienced several tragedies. One Dutch pioneer died after falling from a precipice. An older transient died of hypothermia. The group was led by Jules Jefroykin, whom the AJ leaders sent to Spain with the purpose of 'finishing the business' initiated by Croustillon and Steinhorn the previous year.[93] The Russian Jules Jefroykin, himself a leader of the AJ as well as JDC representative in France, travelled to Barcelona at the end of May. Jefroykin had chosen this new route through Andorra for two reasons. Firstly, he aimed to restore the normal functioning of the SER after the route through Saint-Girons had been dismantled following the arrest and execution of some of its members. In addition to that, Jefroykin also wanted to establish a faster route to Barcelona, where he hoped to reach an agreement with Sequerra regarding the reception of refugees sent by the AJ. With good credentials as both leader of the Jewish resistance and JDC representative in France, Jefroykin's negotiations were far more successful than those who preceded him in 1943.[94] On 18 July, Jefroykin met with Elyahu Dobkin of the JAP, who thereafter helped him obtain Palestine certificate for those sent by the AJ across the Franco-Spanish border.

On 17 May 1944, a French collaborator informed the Germans that one of AJ's convoys was due to leave from Toulouse that same day, causing serious harm to the SER and threatening the very existence of these rescue operations. Adrien, the *passeur* from Saint-Girons who had led many of the SER's convoys

[92] OHD-(1)34, Testimony of Jacques Roitman, 9.
[93] Pehle to Leavitt (18 May 1944); JDC, Reel 70, Folder 917.
[94] OHD-(1)61, Jules Jefroykin ('Dika').

through the Pyrenees, was arrested and executed, and a another guide was deported. The Germans also arrested Jacques Roitman and other five members of the resistance at the Saint-Cyprien train station.[95] When the Germans arrested them, Roitman had just seen a first group of youngsters depart towards the Pyrenees and were about to return to Toulouse to bring the second group to the station. Fortunately, those who had already departed to the Pyrenees managed to arrive safely in Spain; whilst the remaining 40 members of the convoy were warned of the incident on time and did not leave the maquis at Bic that day. Next to Roitman was the *chef de convoy,* Léo Cohn, a well-known personality of the EIF and *rabbi aumônier* of German origin.[96] As *chef de convoy*, Cohn carried with him a large sum of money as well as list with the names of the entire convoy. As told by Cohn's wife, Rachel Cohn, Léo managed to swallow the list of names while he was being transferred to prison.[97] After enduring several weeks of torture at Toulouse's Saint-Michel prison, Jacques Roitman was sent to Buchenwald, where he remained interned until liberation in April 1945. Léo Cohn was sent to the Drancy transit camp. At Drancy, his EIF comrade Elsa Baron attempted to liberate him, but Cohn refused. There were hundreds of orphan children at Drancy who were all by themselves and Cohn chose to look after them, organise study groups, and practice choral singing, as he had done previously with the pioneers of the EIF. Minutes before being deported as part of the 77th convoy, on 30 July 1944, Léo wrote a letter to his wife Rachel explaining the miseries of these children. After spending most of their life in a camp many amongst them did not know even a single detail about their own identities. Léo Cohn and 300 of 'his' children were murdered in the gas chambers upon arrival in Auschwitz.[98] Despite the tragedy, Jacques' brother, Léon Roitman, took over the organisation of SER's convoys to Spain. Between June and August 1944, six more convoys of 25 to 45 persons each arrived safely in Spain.[99]

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[95] CDJC, DLXI-91, Testimony of M. Roman, 1.
[96] The term '*rabbi aumônier*' refers to those rabbis appointed by the Great Rabbi of France and authorised by the Vichy government to visit the camps of southern France.
[97] CDJC, DLXI-19/20, Rachel Cohn, 2.
[98] Hersco and Lazarus (eds.), *Organisation Juive de Combat*, 393-394
[99] Lazare, *La Résistance Juive en France*, 310.

Although SER was administered by the AJ, the functioning of these clandestine crossings depended largely on the members of the Dutch Jewish resistance. The *HeHalutz* ('The Pioneer') was the Dutch equivalent to the EIF movement in France, and had also been forced into clandestinity following the implementation of the 'Final Solution'. Like its French counterpart, the *HeHalutz* was also a Zionist movement and thus sought to send young Jewish pioneers to Palestine: the *halutzim*. The fact that they both had this agenda in common favoured the development of a symbiotic relationship between the two organisations. The Dutch benefited from the AJ's networks and infrastructure in the South of France, which helped their *hazutzim* reach Palestine via Spain. The AJ, on the other hand, profited from an extremely valuable contribution from the members of the *HeHalutz*: German forged documents.

Back in August 1942, the charismatic German Jewish youth leader Joachim Simon ('Shushu') began to cooperate with Joop Westerweel, a Dutch Christian schoolteacher and principal of a Rotterdam progressive school. Together, they established a clandestine rescue network that later became known as the '*Westerweel Groep*'.[100] Shushu, who was also a member of the youth Zionist movement *Kadima* ('forwards' or 'eastwards') had been arrested during *Kristallnacht* and interned at the Buchenwald camp, with many of his fellow pioneers. According to his comrade Joseph Linnewiel, it was in Buchenwald that Shushu developed 'a spirit of rebellion and resistance'.[101] After his release the following month, Shushu decided to settle in a pioneer training camp in Loosdrecht, in the Netherlands —since these had been banned in the German Reich— and it was there that he began his clandestine activity. At first, the *Westerweel Groep* focused on hiding Dutch Jews to save them from deportation to the Westerbork transit camp. Soon, Shushu and his colleagues realised that hiding within the Netherlands was far too risky for both the rescued and their underground movement. First, they attempted clandestine

[100] See Yehudi Lindeman, 'All or Nothing: The Rescue Mission of Joop Westerweel', in David Scrase, Wolfgang Mieder, and Katherine Quimby Johnson (eds.), *Making a Difference: Rescue and Assistance during the Holocaust. Essays in Honor of Marion Pritchard* (Burlington, VT: Centre for Holocaust Studies at the University of Vermont, 2004), 241-265.
[101] CDJC, DLXI-61, Testimony of Joseph Linnewiel, 2-3.

crossings into Switzerland, but the first and only convoy to this neutral country met with the death of all the participants involved in the operation. In the fall of 1942, Shushu met the MJS leader Toto Giniewski in Grenoble and learnt about the clandestine networks through the Pyrenees.[102] With this in mind, Shushu concentrated his efforts on finding a way to transfer the Dutch *halutzim* across Belgium and France. The resulting route initiated in the Dutch village of Budel and crossed Belgium through Antwerpen, Ghent, and Brussels, and through occupied France to the Demarcation line with Vichy France. In January 1943, Shushu was arrested and committed suicide two days later to avoid revealing any sensitive information during his impending torture.[103]

The man who took over Shushu's work was the German Kurt Reilinger ('Nano'), a leading figure in the Dutch pioneer movement whom AJ leader Lucien Lublin defined as the *HeHalutz*'s 'spiritual leader'.[104] During his activity, Reilinger expanded the existing escape routes to France in cooperation with the main Jewish resistance groups in France: the MJS, the EIF-*La Sixième*, and the AJ. At that time, the only way to cross the Demarcation Line was clandestinely. To assist escapees from the northern zone on their way to the south, the Alsatian Félix Goldschmidt settled in the small village of Viraron, not far from the Demarcation Line.[105] From the spring of 1943, however, the Dutch underground began to use a more sophisticated method of flight. Having stolen genuine German stamps and documents on one of their missions, they were able to create forged documents and travel as 'Aryans' in the trains of the *Organisation Todt*, under the pretext that they had been assigned to work on the South-Western segment of the Atlantic Wall —at the base of the Pyrenees. By the summer of 1943, the Dutch underground was widely using this system to migrate to the south. Thereafter, the leaders of the *HeHalutz* began to look for ways to reach Palestine via Spain.

Instead of falsifying documents from the *Todt* organisation, the Dutch

[102] CDJC, DLXI-31, Testimony of Toto Giniewski, 13.
[103] CDJC, DLXI-61, Testimony of Joseph Linnewiel, 2-3.
[104] CDJC, DLXI-67, Testimony of Lucien Lublin, 17.
[105] Goldschmidt was arrested on 12 July 1943, and after transit through Drancy, was sent to Auschwitz where he managed to survive until liberation. OHD-(1)56, Oral testimony of Félix ('Shalom') Goldschmidt.

pioneers began to use their German stamps in a different way. Benefitting from their 'Aryan' looks and their knowledge of the German language, the *halutzim* started to disguise themselves as members of the Wehrmacht and the Gestapo. This allowed the Dutch Jews to travel from the Netherlands to Toulouse much more comfortably, taking advantage of services reserved for the Wehrmacht. They used train cars '*nur fur Wehrmacht*', ate thanks to '*nur fur Wehrmacht*' food coupons, and stayed over at '*nur fur Wehrmacht*' Hotels, all at the expense of Nazi Germany. But this was also extremely dangerous. The SER leader Jacques Roitman was extremely nervous when he first met with Dutch pioneer Ernst Hirsch ('Willy') in one of those Werhmacht-crowded hotels to discuss the future collaboration between the French and the Dutch underground movements. As a result of this partnership, however, the Dutch pioneers began to supply the AJ with 'special mission' documents that allowed the SER convoys to reach the Franco-Spanish border with much less surveillance, since the Germans did not examine their own train cars so closely. Ocassionally, these counterfeit documents allowed one of the Dutch Jews —disguised as a Gestapo agent— to escort a group of fellow Jews into the Pyrenees' forbidden perimeter. The pretext for these 'special missions' was that these were forced labourers who had been assigned to build German fortifications along the Franco-Spanish border. Obviously, such fortifications were fictional, and the convoy would vanish into the mountains as soon as they were out of the reach of the Germans.[106]

The Dutch pioneer Joseph Linnewiel was one of those *halutzim* whose physical appearance and German language skills allowed him to lead several convoys towards Spain disguised as an agent of the Gestapo. Using train cars reserved for the Germans, he would travel between Paris, Lyon, Bourdeaux, and Toulouse in order to gather Jews to bring to the Pyrenees. Since Linnewiel often felt extremely anxious about his Dutch accent whenever one of the 'real' Nazis started a conversation, he developed a strategy that resulted quite effective. Whenever he saw himself in that situation, he tried to intimidate the German soldier in question by adopting the 'military tone' that was typical of

[106] See CDJC, DLXI-88/89 Jacques Roitman; and OHD-(1)34, Jacques Roitman.

the Gestapo. While Linnewiel gathered the rest of the convoy's members, those already in the south of France awaited at *Le Corps Franc de la Montagne Noire* (CFMN), or at the maquis established by the AJ at Biques to prepare their émigrés for their journey to Palestine. Once all of the members of the convoy were ready for the crossing, Linnewiel led the group of 45 towards the Pyrenees. Ironically, on their way to Spain, a group of French *maquisards* nearly shot all of them because they could not believe that these were Jews who had managed to escape the Nazis.[107]

Their courage, however, sometimes came at a great cost. In March 1944, Westerweel was arrested, and with him, the Jewish resistance lost its key contacts in the Netherlands. On 27 April, the Germans broke into Paris's Hôtel Versigny and arrested several Dutch pioneers, seized all sort of seals, stamps, and printing equipment used to forge German documentation.[108] Over the course of the war, most of the Westerweel network members were arrested and deported, and only a few of them managed to survive the war after contributing immensely to the clandestine migration into Spain.[109] Overall, the Dutch *hazutzim* smuggled some seventy youngsters into Spain between February 1943 and May 1945, most of them Dutch youth pioneers from the Loosdrecht and Amsterdam pioneer camps.[110]

Thanks to the efforts of the AJ, on the other hand, at least 313 persons reached Spain between March 1943 and August 1944 —although JDC sources suggest the total to be 435.[111] Of these, 225 were adults —including 33 women— and 88 were children. 2 persons died while crossing the Pyrenees. 6 were deported. From Spain, 18 Adults left on the SS *Nyassa* in February 1944. 175 adults and 79 children left aboard the SS *Guinée* in October 1944. The adults were mostly former Scouts from dissolved EIF centers, Dutch Jewish refugees, and other Zionists who were eager to reach Palestine to join the Jewish Brigade.

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[107] CDJC, DLXI-61, Testimony of Joseph Linnewiel.
[108] Avni, 'The Zionist Underground', 570.
[109] 'Rapport Concernant l'Organisation Juive de Combat' (25 October 1944); CDJC, CMXX-5.
[110] Lindeman, 'All or Nothing', 253-4.
[111] See JDC Lisbon files on arrivals to Spain; YIVO, RG-335.5, Folder 725.

The children came from OSE homes.[112]

[112] Lazare, *La Résistance Juive en France*, 311. See also Pehle to Leavitt (13 July 1944); JDC, Reel 70, Folder 917.

The War Refugee Board in the Peninsula: a Lost Opportunity?

On 22 January 1944, President Roosevelt announced the establishment of the War Refugee Board (WRB), an executive agency that was 'to take all measures within its power to rescue victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death'.[113] The WRB is arguably the most important initiative undertaken by the US government to save Jewish lives from murder at the hands of the Nazi killing machine. Amongst its main functions were the development of plans for the rescue, maintenance, transportation, and relief of victims of Nazi oppression, as well as their relocation to temporary havens in areas away from danger. The WRB was created on initiative of three Treasury Department lawyers —John Pehle, Ansel Luxford, and Josiah E. DuBois Jr.— who had grown frustrated over the failure of the US State and Treasury Departments to deal with the question of refugees, and in particular with the delays in issuing Treasury Licences to relief organisations assisting Jews escape the Nazis. As Israeli historian Yehuda Bauer noted, 'what made WRB such a unique body is that it was officially permitted to break practically every important law of a nation at war in the name of outraged humanity'.[114] Indeed, the WRB was endowed with great powers. As an executive agency, it answered directly to the US President. WRB staff included the US Secretaries of State, the Treasury, and War. WRB was entitled to assistance and supplies from all other government agencies, it was not required to obtain Treasury Licenses to fund its projects, and, perhaps most importantly, it could bypass conventional diplomacy to engage in rescue negotiations with foreign governments and even enemy agents. Although initially restricted to a staff of thirty, the WRB soon grew into a staff of seventy. To fulfil its mission, the WRB also cooperated extensively with US aid organisations in the field, and appointed —or tried to appoint— special representatives to strategic areas in Europe: Great Britain,

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[113] Executive Order No. 9417 (22 January 1944); WRB, Par I, Reel 1, Folder 1.
[114] Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust*, 403.

Italy, North Africa, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Turkey.[115]

Upon its creation in late January 1944, one of the WRB's main goals was to facilitate the evacuation through Spain of as many Jews as possible from Nazi-occupied Europe. To accomplish this 'extremely urgent task', the WRB was conscious of the fact that it was first necessary to establish a 'moving belt' that would carry refugees already in Spain to the safety of the NARC at Fedhala. Evidently, obtaining the cooperation of the Spanish government was a precondition to such project. Therefore, the WRB also urged US ambassador Hayes to press the Spanish government for the relaxation of Spanish border policies, and the establishment of refugee reception centres alongside the Pyrenees to welcome and look after the refugees before their prompt removal from Spain.[116] But Hayes was hesitant to risk US diplomatic relations with the Spanish government.[117] The WRB's proposal coincided with the second oil embargo imposed by the Allies on Francoist Spain, in protest at its continuing to supply Wolfram to Nazi Germany.[118] Not content with Hayes' response, WRB Executive Director John Pehle insisted again on the urgency of WRB's plans for Spain, and proposed RSARO director David Blickenstaff as WRB representative to Spain.[119] Considering that Blickenstaff was already taking good care of the stateless refugee situation in Spain, the US ambassador refused to make any change 'which might impair [the] effectiveness of this work'.[120]

It is not clear whether Hayes failed to understand the mission and scope of the WRB, or simply refused to cooperate. In his view, the number of stateless persons pouring into Spain at the beginning of 1944 was negligible, not as a consequence of Spain's restrictive border policy, but due to the many challenges facing refugees trying to reach Spain from occupied Europe.[121] The WRB

[115] On the WRB, see Erbelding, *Rescue Board*.
[116] Stettinius to Hayes [25 January 1944]; WRB, Part II, Reel 2, File 16; and J.B. Friedman, WRB Assistant director, to Hayes (7 February 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 10, File 14.
[117] Hayes to Stettinius (15 February 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 28, File 3.
[118] Wolfram, or wolframite, is one of the principal sources of tungsten, a rare metal that was essential to both the Allied and Axis war effort for its steel-hardening qualities. See Leonard Caruana, and Hugh Rockoff, 'A Wolfram In Sheep's Clothing: Economic Warfare In Spain, 1940-1944', *Journal of Economic History* 63:1 (2003), 65-99.
[119] Stettinius to Hayes (25 February 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 1, File 10.
[120] Hayes to Stettinius (3 March 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 3, File 10.
[121] Hayes to Stettinius (28 February 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 2, File 17.

agreed with Hayes that the influx of refugees into Spain was at that time negligible, and insisted that this was precisely why they wanted to take measures before the arrival of spring weather: to increase the number of persecuted Jews reaching Spain safely. As envisioned by the WRB, these measures involved the establishment of three refugee centres along the Franco-Spanish border: Tolosa (San Sebastián), Murillo (Zaragoza), and Figueras (Girona). Each of these reception centres would have a supervisor and a small staff that would liaise with the WRB's representative in Madrid —most likely Blickenstaff.[122] Upon crossing the Pyrenees into Spain, refugees would be directed by the Spanish police to the nearest of these three centres, thus minimising the time they spent in the hands of Spanish authorities, and facilitating their rapid evacuation to North Africa.[123] But the US ambassador, who did not conceal his opinion that the WRB was an 'unrealistic organization', argued that the establishment of refugee reception camps in Spain would be seen by Madrid as an infringement of Spanish sovereignty.[124] Furthermore, Hayes remained adamant that such plans would duplicate the work of RSARO, as well as contravene the agreement obtained from the Spanish government at the beginning of 1943, by which the US Embassy had promised to channel all US relief work through Blickenstaff's office.[125] Regardless of the potential for rescue of the WRB in Spain, it seems, therefore, that there was some ground to Hayes' hesitations in regards to the WRB proposals. It is also possible that Hayes felt too proud of RSARO's achievements to accept sharing the credit for improving Spain's refugee situation.

On 14 March, Hayes temporarily blocked a Treasury Licence worth $100,000 that had been sent to Sequerra for the purpose of rescue of Jewish children from France, arguing that David Blickenstaff was the highest authority

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[122] See Myles Standish, WRB, to Hayes (18 March 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 23, File 14.
[123] Benjamin Akzin, WRB Special Assistant, 'Memorandum' (12 April 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 8, File 28.
[124] See James H. Mann's conversation with US ambassador Hayes in 'Report of James H. Mann on Trip to Portugal and Spain' (30 August 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 28, File 6.
[125] Hayes to Stettinius (20 March 1944); FDRL, Records of the WRB, Box 46, Folder 'Evacuation through Spain'.

on refugee matters in Spain. Eventually, Schwartz alerted Sequerra about his licence. Hayes believed that the WRB's plans to engage in clandestine rescue operations 'could well jeopardise' the position of RSARO in Spain, as well as his own relationship with the Franco government. In Hayes' view, WRB officials did not understand the Spanish context, and did not take into account the hostility towards relief and refugee matters that was so characteristic of the Franco government. Refusing to approach Madrid to request the establishment of any additional relief body in Spin, Hayes urged the WRB to 'take full advantage of the already proven facilities' of Blickenstaff's organisation.[126] Hayes was the only one to hold this opinion. When the British FO instructed Sir Samuel Hoare to appoint David Blickenstaff as the IGCR's representative to Spain, the British ambassador refused echoing Hayes fears, namely, that the establishment of a new refugee organisation in Spain was likely to upset the Spanish government.[127] Naturally, ambassador Hayes agreed with the British ambassador on this point.[128]

Demoralised by the 'absolute impossibility' of obtaining Hayes' cooperation in Spain, the WRB began to look for alternative partnerships to bypass the US ambassador.[129] The WRB then decided to enlist 'special agent' David Zagha, a Syrian-born Jew with contacts in the US Army in North Africa, to increase the flow of refugees into Spain. While realising the risks involved, the WRB was reassured by Zagha's previous experience in getting refugees across the Pyrenees, and put $2,000 at his disposal to see what he could do.[130] Much to the WRB's embarrassment, Zagha's first decision as 'special agent' of the WRB was to tour the South American continent to acquaint himself with government officials in Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina, allegedly in

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[126] Hayes to Stettinius (22 March and 6 April 1944); WRB Part I, Reel 28, File 3; and Part II, Reel 2, File 17 respectively.
[127] Winant to Stettinius (6 March 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 10, File 14.
[128] Pehle to Morgenthau (27 March 1944); FDRL, Morgenthau Diaries, Volume 714, File 217-8.
[129] Pehle to Morgenthau (27 March 1944); FDRL, Morgenthau Diaries, Volume 714, Files 217-8. Pehle was not just angry at Hayes, but at the US State Department: 'I cannot believe that the Department of State will wish to share in the responsibility of denying to the WRB the right to have a representative of its own choosing in this crucial area'. In Pehle, Memorandum to Stettinius (7 August 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 1, File 10.
[130] Pehle to Ackermann (21 March 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 27, File 12.

preparation for some grandiose rescue plan.[131] Rather than focusing on purely clandestine methods of rescue, Zagha thought that the best way to alter the policy of the Spanish government was to convince General Franco himself, hence why he began gathering support around the world. By the time Zagha travelled back to Algiers in May, the WRB was less positive that his services would be of any use. Given his great plans were likely to cause more harm than good to the WRB's interests in Spain, Zagha was dismissed.[132]

WRB's work in Portugal was not as problematic as in Spain, at least in its early days. In late February 1944, WRB appointed the Unitarian minister Robert C. Dexter as WRB representative in Lisbon. Robert and his wife Dr. Elisabeth A. Dexter had headed the USC office in Lisbon since 1942, and had extensive experience in relief and rescue matters. The fact that Robert Dexter was also one of USC's founders, as well as its Executive Director, seemed to provide further reassurances to the WRB. While Robert took this new position, his wife Elizabeth replaced him at the head of the USC office in Lisbon. On 9 February 1944, the representatives of the main relief agencies in Lisbon were invited to the US Embassy to greet the new WRB representative to Lisbon, and to learn about what Robert Dexter described as the WRB's 'emergency life-saving task'. The WRB offered the relief organisations at Lisbon speedier transatlantic communications through US diplomatic channels, political support when dealing with Portuguese authorities, as well as additional funding.[133] In exchange, Dexter urged the representatives from these private relief agencies to cooperate with the WRB and with each other, as 'nothing would be more disastrous than competition or organisational strife'.[134] But this was precisely what followed: competition and organisational strife.

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[131] Rebecca L. Erbelding, *About Time: The History of the War Refugee Board* (George Mason University: PhD Thesis, 2006), 317-8.

[132] Ackermann to Pehle (7 May 1944), and Pehle to Ackermann (18 May 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel, File 1.

[133] It seems that most Lisbon-based relief groups benefitted from the generosity of the WRB, which issued treasury licences to JDC and AFSC for purchasing food packages ($25,000 each); to USC for medical supplies in French camps (no limit); to the Jewish Labor Committee ($10,000) and the WJC ($50,000) for the evacuation of refugees from France. For the full list of licences, see Erbelding, *About Time*, 727-34.

[134] Edward S. Crocker, Counsellor of Embassy at US Embassy in Lisbon, Minutes of the 'Meeting of Representatives of American Agencies dealing with War Refugees (28 April 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 2, File 15.

Ironically, the foremost impediment to the WRB's mission in Portugal was the WRB's representative himself. Dexter's personality had caused numerous issues within the USC over the previous years. In November 1941, for instance, Dexter had already threatened to resign from his position as director of USC Lisbon to protest for his 'lack of freedom of action'. More specifically, Dexter was disappointed with the reluctance of the US Treasury Department to grant the USC with a Licence to allow USC funds to reach its Lisbon office. Dexter withdrew his resignation letter a week later.[135] When comparing Dexter's correspondence to that of other high-ranking relief workers such as JDC's Schwartz, AFSC's Conard, or RSARO's Blickenstaff, Dexter's personality comes across as immature and narcissistic. Despite his multiple directing roles at the USC, and his parallel work as OSS agent (codename 'Corn'), most of Dexter's correspondence deals with minute details about weather conditions, the courses of his meals, and the timing of his baths. Likewise, his drive to offer relief to refugees in need seemed more motivated by a thirst for prestige rather than genuine interest in assisting others. Dexter was hardly cooperative and was instead strongly opinionated about people both within the USC as well as from other committees. Immediately after the AFSC opened office in Lisbon, for instance, Dexter began to complain that their mere presence in Lisbon caused them 'untold difficulties', and concluded: 'I wish that they were not here'.[136]

Robert Dexter's personality cause numerous problems with his own coworkers at USC. He repeatedly accused Charles Joy, for instance —whom Dexter had replaced as director of USC Lisbon in 1942— for his alleged lack of interest in migration and relief work, and despite the fact that Joy was completely invested in working with refugees.[137] In January 1943, Robert Dexter's contempt for Joy materialised in a letter of accusation that he sent directly to USC Chairman William Emerson in Boston.[138] In the report Joy

[135] Dexter to Frederick M. Eliot (1 December 1941); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 17.
[136] Dexter, USC Lisbon, to Seth Gano, USC Boston (27 May 1941); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 10.
[137] Joy to Dexter (4 May 1942); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 19.
[138] Dexter to Emerson (25 January 1943); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 24.

submitted in his defence, he confessed 'a deep sense of disgust and revolt that in these critical days, when lives are being lost every day, I must stop an important work of rescue … in order to present a defence which I have very little interest in presenting'.[139] The same can be said of his relationship with Martha and Waitstill Sharp. The Sharps were shocked to discover what Dexter has said of them in his correspondence with the ARC. They complained that Robert Dexter had acted as an individual rather than as USC representative, and that he had done 'all he could to weaken us'.[140] As if this was not enough, there is also evidence that Dexter was no friend to Jews. Unlike Blickenstaff's staff at the RSARO office in Madrid, Dexter's staff at the USC office in Lisbon were all protestant refugees of various nationalities. Under his command as well, USC migration work in Lisbon prioritised political over Jewish refugees, as 'there is far greater danger in granting such visas to Jewish people'.[141] In a letter to Joy dated 28 September, Dexter shared his views regarding the onset of the deportations from France in the late summer of 1942. In view of his 'sensitivity' to the plight of the Jews, it is quite a tragedy that such a man was appointed to further the WRB's mission:

> 'Jewish sources say that they [are] dead on arrival, and there is no reason to doubt the story that several [who] die in each wagon are being used for soap. I myself doubt this story … and even if [is] true it does not shock me as much as some other things. If they are dead they can suffer no more'.[142]

Dexter's only rescue initiative as WRB delegate to Portugal was to negotiate the establishment of a children's home in Lisbon to host the child convoys that the *Armée Juive* was smuggling across the Pyrenees. Ironically, despite having previously requested mutual cooperation between all relief groups in Lisbon, Dexter did so behind the back of all other relief committees, and especially the JDC. The proposal came from the representative of the

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[139] Joy, 'An Answer by Mr. Joy to the Charges Made by Dr. Dexter' (3 April 1944); USC, bMS-16004/25(14).
[140] Martha Sharp to Elizabeth Dexter (6 June 1941); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 11.
[141] Dexter to Hooper (11 June 1941); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 11.
[142] Dexter to Joy (28 September 1942); Dexter Papers, Box 1, Folder 20

World Jewish Congress (WJC) in Lisbon, the Turkish-born Isaac Weissman. Weissman, himself a refugee from Vienna, became the Lisbon unofficial representative of WJC's Committee for Relief of the War-Stricken Jewish Population (RELICO) in early 1941. Unlike most other relief workers, Weissman did not believe in maintaining good terms with diplomats and authorities, and thus clashed often with Amzalak's Lisbon Jewish Community. Weissman was interested in illegal means of rescue —like the Dexters, he was also an OSS agent— and thus clashed with the main two Jewish committees: JDC and HICEM. In exchange, Weissman maintained good relations with Dexter and the USC, who were more prone to clandestine activities.[143] Weissman's proposed reception centre in Lisbon was expected to host 300 children and would cost about $100,000 per month —a rather high amount considering that the money would not lead to the rescue of any child strictly speaking. When Dexter informed Washington about Weissman's plans, the WRB advised Dexter to liaise with Schwartz, since the JDC was already engaged in the rescue of children from France and these activities 'would be greatly endangered if two organizations without coordination through you [Dexter] should be trying to rescue the same children'.[144] And this is exactly what happened.

Dexter, who felt more sympathy for the riskier relief practices of the WJC than for the lawful approach of the JDC, estimated that the WJC would be able to rescue children for less money.[145] Weissman, in turn, not only resented the JDC's indisputable role as the most prominent Jewish relief agency. Additionally, Weissman was adamant that the rescued children should be sent to Palestine provided they had no relatives in the US —a point on which the JDC disagreed. In May 1944, Weissman sent Manuel Alves, a Spaniard who worked for his committee, to bring the children recently arrived from France. But on his way to the Franco-Spanish frontier Alves was arrested. Weissman claimed that it had been the JDC who denounced his man, in an attempt to steal 'his' children. Even after the war, the RELICO representative was

143 Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust*, 213-4.
144 WRB to Dexter (1 May 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 10, Folder 15.
145 Dexter, 'Preliminary Report on Activities' (2 May 1944); WRB, Part I, Reel 2, Folder 15.

convinced that he could have saved 'hundreds upon hundreds more' had the JDC not have interfered in his work.[146]

Evidently, Isaac Weissman was, like Robert Dexter, a particular personality. It does not seem surprising, then, that Weissman had such an admiration for Dexter, whom he described as 'the most sincere, honest, and devoted man for such a consecrated job'.[147] Unlike most other committee delegates, Weissman operated alone, only reporting to Abraham Silberschein, of the WJC Geneva office, and Nahum Goldmann, of the WJC headquarters in New York. He had no resources or infrastructure at his disposal. Instead he requested funding from the JDC to finance relief initiatives that were already covered by the JDC, thus duplicating the offer of relief. Weissman was prone to confrontation with other Jewish representatives, most of whom did not share his fervent Zionism.[148] In December 1942, for instance, many clandestine refugees in Portugal tried to avoid arrest by the PVDE through hiding. Weissman explained the situation to the PVDE, and convinced them to confine these refugees in 'forced residence' to the town of Ericeira, where they would live at the expense of private relief agencies. In exchange, the police would be able to easily control the refugees' endeavours and pressure them to migrate. To that end, Weissman established a Relief Commission for Legalizing Aliens' Stay in Ericeira (*Comissão de Auxílio aos Estrangeiros para a Legalisação da sea Estadia na Ericeira*). Unexpectedly, Weissman was arrested and compelled to stay in forced residence for two days before being set free. Weissman was convinced that his arrest had been plotted jointly by the JDC and Lisbon's Jewish Community.[149]

On 1 June 1944, WRB Assistant Executive Director James H. Mann arrived in Lisbon to find a solution to the various difficulties that the WRB encountered in the Iberian Peninsula, and in particular, to mediate between the JDC and the WJC over the 'stolen children' dispute. Prior to leaving for Lisbon,

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[146] Isaac Weissman, 'My Experiences with the JOINT' ([early 1947]); WJC, H-16, File 8.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Milgram, *Portugal, Salazar, and the Jews*, 167.
[149] The 'Ericeira affair' is described in 'Report of James H. Mann on Trip to Portugal and Spain' (30 August 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 28, File 6.

Mann had met with Moses Leavitt (JDC) and Leon Kubowitzki (WJC) in New York to get a sense of their conflicting versions. Whereas the JDC maintained that Dexter had mishandled the situation and was prejudiced against them, the WJC raised all sorts of accusations against the JDC. Upon arrival to Lisbon, Mann soon found out that Dexter's position in the conflict was far from impartial. Dexter presented Weissman as a man who could 'really do the job' and who had been mistreated by Schwartz, who, in Dexter's opinion, 'felt that the JDC had a monopoly on rescue and relief operations'. Mann concluded that Dexter was 'strongly prejudiced against the JDC', and that he 'hadn't devoted too much thought' to finding new ways of saving more Jewish lives. Indeed, even though he had been appointed the WRB's representative in Lisbon, Dexter did not seem to understand why the WRB did not devote more time to rescuing people 'other than Jews'. To top it all, Dexter advised Mann not to pay much attention to the views of the Lisbon Jewish Community, whom he accused of 'making a great deal of money out of the war, presumably by dealing with the Germans'.

Mann also discussed the matter with Weissman, who expressly claimed that the JDC had 'kidnapped children' brought to Spain by the Jewish resistance, and that Sequerra had threatened his liaison in the Jewish underground (Croustillon) with imprisonment unless these children were turned over to him. But Weissman's list of accusations did not end there, as he also blamed the JDC for his arrest during the 'Ericeira affair', for refusing to fund WJC's rescue work, and for doing 'nothing' towards rescue. These views were countered during Mann's conversation with Schwartz's subordinate at the JDC office in Lisbon: Robert Pilpel. The JDC accused Weissman of kidnapping 13 of 'their' children, and justified their refusal to cooperate with the WJC their lack of structure and experience on rescue activities (on this point they underestimated them).[150] Eventually, Weissman did receive some funds to establish his children's home at Paço d'Arcos, a beach resort in the outskirts of Lisbon. However, despite the fact that Dexter invested WRB money in

[150] 'Report of James H. Mann on Trip to Portugal and Spain' (30 August 1944); WRB, Part II, Reel 28, File 6.

furnishing the house for the rescue of hundreds of children, this centre only accommodated 13 children —whom JDC claimed had been stolen from them— who had been brought to Spain by the AJ. Following the liberation of France in August 1944, Spain became cut off from enemy territory and thus lost its rescuing potential. Although the WRB continued its operations in Europe until September 1945, Pehle concluded that 'in view of French victories no further efforts should be made to rescue either adults or children from France through Spain'.[151]

[151] Pehle, WRB, telegram No. 2331 (24 August 1944); Hayes Papers, Box 6, Folder 'Refugee Organizations'.

Conclusion

The Jewish refugee crisis was not a byproduct of Nazi anti-Jewish policy, it was one of its primary goals. The Nazi policy of forcing the emigration of Jews from the Reich was deliberately engineered, not just for ideological reasons, but also with a view to the future war. In the fragile economic context of the 1930s, the Nazis exported the 'Jewish refugee problem' as a means of stirring up antisemitic and anti-refugee feelings abroad, inspiring authoritarian responses, and destabilising democratic societies. With every new stage of antisemitic radicalisation in Nazi Germany, Jewish refugees were rendered increasingly dependent on foreign assistance. Naturally, governments around the world resorted to restrictive immigration policies to 'protect' themselves from these 'undesirables'. This, in turn, exacerbated the crisis even further.

With regards to South-Western Europe, the Jewish refugee crisis unfolded in three different stages. Each of these stages was triggered by a key event: Hitler's rise to power in 1933, the fall of Western Europe in May-June 1940, and the Allied invasion of French North Africa in November 1942. From the beginning, France was one of the countries to absorb most refugees from Nazi Germany. The liberal Spanish Republic was also welcoming, but did not represent a particularly attractive destination to most German Jews. The Portuguese *Estado Novo*, on the other hand, was even less appealing due to its militaristic and authoritarian nature. Although the League of Nations made several attempts at tackling the situation of Jewish refugees, most member states were cautious not to antagonise the Nazi government, and these initiatives failed. With the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, Spain's role as a country of refuge vanished. From then on, Franco's Spain became a country hostile to Jews and sympathetic to the Axis. After the violent Nazi antisemitic campaign of 1938, Portugal's role as a country of transit intensified, and so did her immigration restrictions.

Following Hitler's *Blitzkrieg* occupation of Western Europe in May-June 1940, a new wave of refugees began a frantic escape towards the Pyrenees. France was divided. The regime that emerged from the ashes in Vichy, was as

anti-refugee as it was antisemitic. To stop the influx of refugees, the Iberian Peninsula introduced its most restrictive immigration policies. In the midst of the chaos, some of these deterrents failed to stop the transit of refugees through the Peninsula. But the shortage of transportation meant that many were left stranded. The Iberian Peninsula became Europe's bottleneck. Vichy France attempted to dispatch refugees by sea, but the logic of war brought this lifeline to a halt. Meanwhile in 1941, relations between the US and Germany deteriorated. And so did migration possibilities to the US. As Nazi Germany prepared for the 'Final Solution', Jewish migration from Belgium and France was banned in May, and from all Nazi-occupied territories in October. That same month, the Franco government banned Jews from sailing on Spanish vessels. From November, all Jews under Nazi rule were rendered stateless. In December, the US declared war, and American sailings from the Peninsula came to a complete halt. From then on, only Portuguese vessels transported Jewish refugees to safety.

In November 1942, the Allied occupation of French North Africa triggered the Axis occupation of Vichy France. The Iberian Peninsula was framed between the Allies in the south, and the Axis in the north. A new wave of refugees from France reached the Pyrenees. This time all of them were irregular. Portugal's centrality as a land of transit shifted to Spain. From 1943, the Western Allies, now in a better military position, began to take steps to tackle the refugee situation. They pressed the Franco regime to accept more refugees and POWs. In exchange they organised relief and evacuation from Spain. In April 1943, the Anglo-American conference met at Bermuda and agreed to reinvigorate the IGCR. Despite very good intentions, the refugee camp at Fedhala was only functional from June 1944, and did not help the rescue of further Jews through Spain. The Jewish resistance was, relative to its scale, quite effective in organising the rescue of Jews across the Pyrenees. The US WRB, by contrast, did not manage to establish an efficient throughput of refugees, and did not improve the situation already managed by RSARO. In August 1944, France was liberated and the Iberian Peninsula was cut off from Nazi-occupied Europe. The possibilities of rescue ended.

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